MAY 22 1957

THE SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

TEXTS OF THE LEADERSHIP TRAINING SERIES

1. Standard Training Series.—A series of studies in the religious needs and capacities of persons of all ages and in ways of dealing with those needs and capacities by means of an effective program of religious education.

2. The Living Book Series.—A new series of Bible study texts. These texts are of a content nature and are planned to cover the whole Bible.

3. Missions and Social Studies Series.—The texts of this series deal with the interpretation and practical application of the Christian religion.

4. Cokesbury Series.—A series of texts designed specifically to meet the needs of the small school by enabling workers to come to a clearer understanding and a more adequate appreciation of their problems and to acquire greater skill in handling these problems.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING SERIES
COKESBURY TRAINING SERIES
E. B. CHAPPELL, EDITOR

THE SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

ITS PLANS AND WORK

BY L. F. SENSABAUGH

EVANGELICAL SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
LIBRARY OF
United Theological Seminary
BV
1520
S3681
1924
12,951

COKESBURY PRESS
NASHVILLE, TENN.
1929

Copyright, 1924
by
Lamar & Barton

SIXTH EDITION

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEDICATION

To My Father

THE REVEREND O. F. SENSABAUGH

Who for nearly fifty years, as an itinerant Methodist preacher, has ardently supported the work of the Sunday school this little volume

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	9
Chapter I	
The Present Awakening	15
Chapter II	
Organizing the Small Sunday School	26
Chapter III	
Selecting and Training the Workers	36
Chapter IV	
The Workers' Council	48
Chapter V	
The Sunday Session	56
Chapter VI	
Worship and Training in Worship	62
Chapter VII	
What to Teach—Lesson Courses	73
Chapter VIII	
Through the Week	83
Chapter IX	
Special Days	93
Chapter X	
Records and Reports	102
Chapter XI	
Sunday School Building and Equipment	110
Chapter XII	
The Sunday School Worker as an Evangelist	125

INTRODUCTION

For a number of years there has been a growing appreciation of the necessity for a trained leadership in the work of the Sunday school. The early efforts for securing such a trained leadership found expression in institutes, summer camps, and various types of conferences. Training through these agencies served a good purpose and laid the foundation for a thoroughgoing and systematic type of training that was due to follow.

Just after the War between the States, Dr. John H. Vincent, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, conceived the idea of a permanent training school for Sunday school workers and established such a school on Lake Chautauqua, New York. Tens of thousands of Sunday school workers of America have journeyed to Lake Chautauqua in order that they might receive information and inspiration in the great school of principles and methods that was conducted there.

In the year 1901, Doctor James Atkins, later Bishop Atkins, then Sunday School Editor and Chairman of the Sunday School Board, initiated the plan to establish a Department of Teacher-Training; and Doctor H. M. Hamill, then prominent as a leader in the International Sunday School Association, was called to be the superintendent of this department and to launch a program of teacher-training in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This, it should be noted, was the first Department of Teacher-Training regularly established by any of the denominations in this country.

A course of study entitled "A Bible Teachers' Study Circle" was planned, consisting of six texts divided into two courses. The first course contained three texts—"Sunday School History and Method," "The Sunday School Teacher," and "Bible Studies." The second course contained texts on "The History of Methodism," "Our Doctrines and Polity," and "The Bible and Its Books." In addition to these, there was a special text for officers of the organized Sunday school.

Doctor Hamill was in a sense a "voice in the wilderness" undertaking single-handed to arouse the Church to the need of training its teachers and officers. He spent a large part of his time traveling over the Church, conducting Sunday School Institutes and preparing the way for the organized movements that were developed later in this field.

Following the organization of the Religious Education Association, a number of leading educators began a careful study of the problems of religious education, especially as it related to the Sunday school. Prominent in the discussion of this group was the problem of a more adequate training course for Sunday school officers and teachers. Thus, before the beginning of the World War in 1914, it had become obvious that a new type of teacher-training was needed by all the denominations—a course more fully in harmony with the well-recognized principles of modern psychology and pedagogy. In 1914, the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations determined to take the steps necessary to create such a course.

In January of 1915 Dr. Hamill passed away, and in August of the same year Rev. John W. Shackford, of

the Virginia Conference, was elected as Superintendent of the Department of Teacher-Training, and thus became from the very first associated with the committee of the Sunday School Council in its work of outlining a new course of study.

In collaboration with the Methodist Episcopal Church the eight general units of the Standard Training Course were developed. And in coöperation with an interdenominational group representing several denominations the specialization courses were outlined.

The units of the Standard Training Course are as follows: "Pupil Study," "Principles of Teaching," "Organization of the Sunday School," "Bible," "The Christian Religion," "Worship," "The Church and Its Work," "Missionary Message of the Bible," "The Learning Process," "How to Teach Religion," and specialization units for each age group and in administration.

This Standard Training Course was designed both in content and scope to meet the requirements of thoroughgoing training with the full recognition of the fact that there would remain certain types of needs, particularly in the smaller schools, which would not be met by this course.

Notwithstanding the fact that a Standard Training Course was prepared with the larger and middle-sized schools in mind, it has nevertheless been used to a very great advantage for workers in hundreds of Sunday schools of the one-room or small-church type.

In view of the obvious need for a training course wrought out with the smaller and less highly developed

school in mind, the General Board has authorized the preparation of a briefer and simpler course to meet this need.

This course is to be called the "Cokesbury Training Course," and is to consist of eight units—six required and two electives—to be chosen from a number of subjects offered. The required units are as follows: "The Small Sunday School: Its Plans and Work;" "The Sunday School Worker: His Life and Work;" "The Sunday School Pupil;" "The Sunday School Teacher;" "How We Got Our Bible;" and "What Every Methodist Should Know." The electives are to be chosen from the following subjects: "A Short History of Methodism," "Studies in the Life of Wesley," "Studies in the Life of Asbury," "Elementary Work in the Small Church," "Adolescent Work in the Small Church," "Work with Young People in the Small Church," "Adult Work in the Small Church," "Evangelism," and "Missions."

This volume is the first unit of the new training course. In its preparation the author has been guided by his own experience as superintendent and teacher in the very small Sunday school and as a Conference Superintendent whose work included several hundred small Sunday schools. This text has been prepared, not for the purpose of adding to the many volumes which have been written upon the Sunday school, but with the very definite purpose of helping that large number of officers and teachers who are laboring under handicaps, physical and otherwise, that are peculiar to the small Church.

The author desires to express his gratitude and appreciation for the assistance rendered by Messrs. C. M. Dannelly and O. W. Moerner, who, as Conference Superintendents, criticized the content of the manuscript; to Dr. John W. Shackford for his assistance, counsel, and advice in the preparation of the text; to Rev. J. Q. Schisler, my associate in the training office; and to the editors of our Sunday school periodicals for revision and correction of the manuscript.

As this little volume goes forth into the hands of the Sunday school workers who labor in the small schools, it is with the prayer and earnest desire that it may bring to them a larger vision and greater appreciation of their opportunity and responsibility. If it shall stimulate them to better work and bring them to a larger degree of satisfaction and a better equipment for the task, the author will be fully compensated. THE AUTHOR.

The Small Sunday School

CHAPTER I

THE PRESENT AWAKENING

Jesus Places the Child in the Midst

"And he took a child and placed it in the midst and said, To such as this belongeth the kingdom of Heaven."

It was nineteen centuries ago that these words fell from the lips of "the Friend of Little Children." The attitude of Jesus toward childhood was also the attitude of the primitive Church. Whatever her other apostasies and errors, the Roman Catholic Church maintains the same attitude toward childhood down to this day, and her chief strength lies in her conservation of the childhood of the Church. But in some of the denominations resulting from the Protestant Reformation childhood was for a long time overlooked or neglected. The harsh theology of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, placing all emphasis upon dogmatic creeds and adult experience, relegated religious education to a minor place and sent the child into obscurity. Since it was believed that a human soul could move Godward only when irresistibly drawn by "prevenient grace" and that the soul was helpless until "God's own good time" should come for its salvation, it was not felt to be really important whether a child received religious training or not; and if such training was actually given,

it was done only for the purpose of enabling the pupil more fully to enjoy some experience that might or might not come to him in the indefinite future.

In later years, as Christian leaders and educators have given a more careful study to the doctrines and life of Jesus and also to child nature, they have come to realize that religion is not a foreign element that must be imported into human life, but that the religious nature is a part of man's original equipment and that the expression of the religious instinct will depend upon the teaching and training that it is given from without. Hence all the great Protestant denominations have once more placed the child in the midst and are seeking to understand his religious nature and supply its needs.

However, the fact must not be overlooked that some of the early reformers, like Martin Luther, saw clearly the spiritual values in childhood and provided for their instruction in the Bible, and classes organized by Luther and later by Wesley, along with their other efforts at public education, laid the foundation for our modern public free-school system.

Early Methodism and the Child

From the first of his ministry, John Wesley preached the significance of the attitude of Jesus toward children, and he instructed his pastors to visit in the homes of the people and spend some time each week in the instruction of children. During his visit to America as a minister he founded what has been claimed by many to be the first Sunday school in America, and a tablet commemorating this event has been erected at Savannah,

Ga. When the Methodist movement took form in England he gave his full support to the work of organizing Sunday schools wherever as many as ten children could be gathered together. Francis Asbury, the great leader and pioneer of American Methodism, gave particular attention to the instruction of children and the founding of Sunday schools at every preaching place. The present great interest in religious training for childhood and youth is the result of the vision of these great leaders who recognized the place of the child in the kingdom and sought to make him central in the program of the Church. We are entering upon a day when Christian leaders everywhere are following the example of the Master and placing the "child in the midst."

The Signs of a New Interest

There are many indications of a great awakening to the importance of religious education. This awakening is expressing itself in several directions.

More People. In the first place, there has never in the history of the Christian Church been so widespread an interest in the program of the Sunday school. For many years the Sunday school was thought of as an institution only for children. To-day there are many thousands of large and influential Bible classes of adults. Fathers and mothers are attending Sunday school. This, of course, has its effect upon the boys and girls. The Sunday school is being taken seriously by old and young alike, and the number and size of Sunday schools are everywhere increasing.

Better Lessons. A second result of the awakening is

that we have become more interested in suitable lesson material. Only a few years ago little thought was given to adapting the lessons to the various ages and groups. Now much attention is given to lesson materials and methods of teaching suitable to each age.

More Time. The third indication of the new interest is the fact that we are coming to appreciate the need of more time for teaching religion. The survey of the Interchurch World Movement has helped to emphasize this need. It revealed the fact that while the Jews are giving 330 hours a year to the religious education of their children and the Roman Catholics are giving 200 hours to specific religious instruction, Protestants are devoting less than twenty-four hours a year to the task of teaching religion. There is now, however, a widespread movement in the direction of giving an increased amount of time to the religious education of our children. Plans are under way for the expansion of the present program of teaching to include one or more week-day periods.

Better Organization. Another indication of an awakening is the rapid advance that has been made in the matter of organization. The Sunday school is no longer a mass meeting of all grades and ages. It is becoming an organized school, with a program of instruction, worship, and service planned with reference to the needs of the various groups that make up the school. Sound educational principles are coming to be recognized as necessary in the Church school of religion just as much as they are in the day school.

Better Buildings. Another characteristic indication

of the awakening interest of the Protestant Church on the subject of religious education is to be found in the great movement now sweeping over the country for securing better buildings and equipment. The church of yesterday was erected with the adult in mind; the pews, the literature, the songbook, the services were all designed for the use of grown men and women. There was literally no place for the child in the Church. The lesson, the prayers, and song, the whole service was in the language of an adult. There is a very touching and beautiful little song that we sometimes sing at Christmas, "There was no place for the Babe in the inn." In a large measure it has been true that there was no place for the child in the Church. But we are upon the threshold of a new and better day. Millions of dollars are now being spent in the erection of new church buildings, and in many cases due emphasis and proper places are given to the needs of children and young people in the plans of buildings.

Increased Interest in Training. Another indication of the awakening in religious education is the great army of voluntary Sunday school officers and teachers who are seeking diligently to make themselves more efficient for the work of teaching and training our children and youth. This great army of voluntary workers is catching a larger and clearer vision of what it means to be colaborers together with God in the bringing in of his kingdom, and with zeal and enthusiasm they are entering upon the task of equipping themselves for this large service. Of all the indications pointing to a new day, none holds higher hope for the religious

education of childhood and youth than the eagerness with which this increasing number of pastors, officers, and teachers is seeking better equipment.

Making the Old Sunday School New

The story is told that when the board of directors of a great railway system determined upon building a new terminal station in an eastern city to meet the needs of their growing business they called in certain engineers and architects and gave instructions for the drawing of the plans for a great building. The plans were finally completed, the board of directors was in session, the engineers and architects had made their report, and a vote was to be taken ordering the construction to begin, when the superintendent of transportation arose from his place at the directors' table and asked the question: "Gentlemen, you are planning to build these new buildings on the site of our old ones. It will take five years to complete this task. What do you propose to do with the traffic that we now have while the new building is being erected?" This question made it necessary to draw new plans that would permit traffic to continue uninterrupted while the new building took the place of the old. This is our task. We must lose none of the values of the old Sunday school. We must save all the best and gradually build out of it a better Sunday school.

How to Begin. It will require much patience and hard work to transform the old school into the new one. Three words may well be remembered as the pastor, officer, or teacher begins the task of working over the

old Sunday school, *grit, grace, and gumption.* Grit, because there will be many disappointments, and it will require patience and perseverance as the ambitious worker pushes toward the goal. Grace, because sometimes those who ought to assist will be found pulling back, and the art of keeping sweet will need to be highly developed. Gumption, another word for common sense, tact in dealing with the work and workers. All the workers will not have caught the same vision or in the same degree, and it will be necessary for the one who has caught the vision to try at first to lead others to the same vision before progress can be made.

Two other elements are essential to success, *enthusiasm* and *information.* Many an effort is wasted because one or the other of these elements is lacking.

The first step in beginning to make the old Sunday school over into a new one is to secure *correct* information as to what ought to be done and then make definite plans for beginning.

Different Programs for Different Schools. It will be readily agreed that schools of different sizes and meeting in various kinds of buildings will need to adopt different programs or plans. Thousands of Sunday schools meet in churches and schoolhouses with but one room. Others will have a few classrooms in addition to the main auditorium, while others will have separate rooms for each class and an assembly room for each department. Of course the same plans cannot be used in all of these schools.

Illustration of Types. The General Sunday School Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

has recognized that the size of the school and the physical equipment have much to do in determining the quality of work that can be done and has established three plans or "Programs of Work" for our Sunday schools.

The Type "A" Program of Work is prepared for the large school where provision can be made for an assembly room for each age group and a separate room for each class.

The Type "B" Program of Work, or the classroom type, is planned for the school that has a limited provision for departmental assembly and a reasonable number of classrooms.

The Type "C" Program of Work is planned for the school that has very limited physical equipment—where the larger part of the membership must meet in the one big room that is used for the preaching service and where there are few, if any, classrooms. The physical equipment largely determines the form of organization, and this last-named program of work is prepared for schools that number two hundred or less working under limited physical conditions.

The purpose of this book is to discuss the principles and methods involved in carrying out the program of Work for the Type "C" Sunday school, and it is given here to guide the study of the text.

Program of Work, Type "C"

The aim of this Program of Work is to offer a plan by which the Sunday school may lead each pupil to a knowledge of God's will and an acceptance of Jesus Christ

as personal Saviour and Lord, and to develop a Christian character that is expressed through worship, right living, and efficient service.

I. *Organization*.....10%

School divided into at least the following groups: Beginner-Primary, four to eight years, inclusive; Junior, nine, ten, and eleven (or twelve) years, inclusive; Intermediate-Senior, (twelve) thirteen to seventeen years, inclusive; Young People-Adult, eighteen years and over. Two extension departments: (1) Cradle Roll Department, (2) Home Department. Annual Promotion Day. All classes above twelve years old organized and enrolled as Wesley classes.

II. *Sunday School Session*.....10%

At least a one-hour session every Sunday—not less than fifteen minutes for worship and a thirty-minute class period.

III. *Workers' Council*.....10%

Workers' Council held monthly or quarterly; all teachers and officers attending regularly and making reports.

IV. *Literature*.....10%

The school using our own literature, or only such other material as may be approved by the General Sunday School Board. The Graded Primary Course used for the Beginner-Primary group, with story method of teaching.

V. *Buildings and Equipment*.....10%

Screens separating classes during lesson period. Buildings and grounds kept in good condition. Comfortable seats for Beginners and Primaries. Black-

boards. All remodeling or new building plans in keeping with the requirements of our denomination.

VI. *Worship and Service*.....10%

A regular program of worship prepared in advance and conducted in a quiet atmosphere. Songbooks approved by the General Sunday School Board. Missionary and other types of Christian service emphasized.

VII. *Leadership Training*.....10%

Some one definitely in charge of training work. Each officer and teacher reading at least one approved book a year or studying one of our Standard Training Courses. Training Day annually.

VIII. *Evangelism*.....10%

Confession or Decision Day observed annually as recommended by the General Sunday School Board.

IX. *Sunday School Day*.....10%

Annual Sunday School Day observed with program and offering sent to Conference Sunday School Board.

X. *General Requirements*.....10%

Accurate records kept for classes and school. Average attendance for the year 50%. Representation in and accurate reports to denominational, pastoral charge, and district Sunday school meetings. Annual survey with follow-up plans.

[NOTE.—When a Sunday school attains 60% of this Program, it is designated as a "Progressive School"; when 80% is attained, it is known as an "Advanced School"; when 100%, it is a "Standard School"—in each case of "Type C." All requirements under any one point must be met before any credit on that point can be claimed.]

Time and Patience Required

The Sunday school worker must not make the fatal mistake of trying to carry out all parts of the program at once. Select certain points as an objective and keep working at them till they are accomplished, then add others from time to time. It will require much time and patience, and success will come only by being everlastingly at it.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. Why is the Sunday school an important institution?
2. From a reading of the New Testament, what was the attitude of Jesus toward children?
3. In what way did Mr. Wesley show his interest in children?
4. What are some of the indications of an increasing interest in the work of the Sunday school?
5. Why does it take time to improve the condition of a Sunday school?
6. Why is it necessary to have a different program for schools of different sizes?

CHAPTER II

ORGANIZING THE SMALL SUNDAY SCHOOL

Factors That Determine Organization

If one were to come into a community with the announcement that he proposed to erect a manufacturing establishment and should call upon the citizens to assist in financing his enterprise, there are three questions that would naturally arise in the minds of interested persons. First, what is the character of the raw material that is to be used? Second, what is the finished product that is to be taken from the factory? Third, how large a supply of raw material will be available for use? When these questions are answered the work of organizing a company, erecting a building, and installing machinery can be considered.

These same questions arise when we consider organizing the Sunday school. We must know something of the raw material and how large a quantity we will have.

The raw material that comes to the Sunday school consists of folks—all kinds of folks, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, young and old, and all ages between, religious and irreligious. It will be the duty of the Sunday school to receive all of these folks and to undertake to teach them about Christ and how to live the Christian way, train them in worship, and help them to live their lives in Christian fellowship and service. The extent of the organization will of necessity

be determined by the needs of these persons and by the total number that are to be reached.

The organization for a school with an enrollment of fifty will be far simpler than for a school of an enrollment of two hundred. But, no matter how small the school may be, some organization is necessary. The organization must also take into account the fact that childhood and youth are growing and learning year by year and that each group must be ministered to according to its particular needs. In planning the organization it must also be remembered the pupil is central in the plan. The school does not exist in order that officers and teachers may be elected nor that their wishes or ideals may prevail, but it exists in order that the need of all the pupils in the school may be met.

Personnel of Organization

When we consider organization we naturally think of certain officers, and always there are needed a sufficient number of officers to attend to the various tasks of the organization. The simpler the organization the fewer the officers.

1. *The Pastor.* Since the school is engaged in a spiritual task, it is the natural thing to recognize that the pastor, who is the spiritual leader of the congregation, is also the chief officer in the Sunday school. His counsel and advice should be sought in forming the policies and selecting the officers and teachers. He will not undertake the details of administration, but he will be vitally concerned with the whole task of the religious training of those who attend Sunday school.

2. *The Superintendent.* This officer is the executive head of the Sunday school. Upon him rests the responsibility for superintending the entire organization. He will largely be responsible for working out the details of the organization and for presenting plans and policies and selecting and training his associates in the work. He should be a good executive, should hold the confidence of the people in the community, should be informed on educational matters, and above all should be religious. His standing in the community as the Sunday school superintendent will have a great influence for good or evil upon the childhood and youth enrolled in his Sunday school.

Where it is possible it will be advisable for the superintendent to have an assistant who will share with him the responsibilities of superintending the whole school. Frequently a faithful superintendent will have grown old in service. It will be well for him to call to his assistance a younger man upon whom his mantle may fall. When such an assistant is selected, the superintendent should share with him in full measure both the duties and honor of the position.

3. *Secretary.* Every Sunday school will need some responsible person who will make up and preserve the records, look after the supplies, and attend to many of the duties that always fall upon such a person. Accuracy, neatness, thoughtfulness, and a spirit of mutual helpfulness should always be evident in this person. The Secretary needs to be very tactful in trying to get the information that he seeks from the teachers and classes. A disagreeable secretary may ruffle the feel-

ings of every officer and teacher in the Sunday school, or he can help materially in making everything run smoothly.

4. *The Treasurer.* Many a Sunday school runs hopelessly in debt because no one has been responsible for a definite financial policy, and the credit of some Sunday schools has been ruined because of the carelessness of the Sunday school treasurer in meeting the obligations that have been incurred. This office may be combined with that of secretary, but most frequently it will be better to select some other person to fill this position.

5. *Leader of Music.* If there is some one in the Sunday school who understands and has a real appreciation of good music and who knows how to lead group singing in a worshipful way, this person should be asked to lead the singing. It may be that the superintendent is this person, it may be some teacher or the pastor, but some one should be definitely in charge of this phase of the work.

6. *Teachers.* The next chapter will be devoted to an extended discussion of selecting and training the workers, hence no extended statement is necessary at this point other than to point out that the teachers are to be considered as officers of the school, and as such are to have a definite part in the forming of plans and policies of organization.

The Organization Itself

1. *Separate into Groups.* The Program of Work for the Type "C" Sunday school makes the following pro-

vision: "The school should be divided into at least the following groups—Beginner-Primary, four to eight years, inclusive; Junior, nine to eleven, inclusive; Intermediate-Senior, twelve to seventeen, inclusive; Young People-Adult, eighteen and over." This means that the school with from twenty-five to thirty-five in attendance should make provision for four separate groups, divided as just indicated. In a school of this size each of these groups would constitute a class. In a school with a larger attendance there will be two or more classes within each group. Each group having two or more classes would constitute a department, and some person, probably one of the teachers, would be designated as superintendent of this group or department.

2. *Classes.* As soon as the desire to organize begins to make itself manifest in classes above twelve years of age each class should be organized and enrolled as a Wesley class. The purpose of this is clear. During this period the loyalties of life begin to develop, and the best point of contact that the Church has with the adolescent boy or girl is through the Sunday school class. If the class is organized with a charter that identifies it with his Church, it will be an easy matter to expand loyalty to the class till it includes loyalty to the school and loyalty to the Church. There are many activities in which an organized class can take part that will tend to interest and hold the group together and by means of which more valuable service can be rendered.

Good leaflet literature has been prepared and may be had free, upon request of the General Sunday School Board, that explains fully the method of organization

of Wesley classes—how to enroll with the various departments and programs of service and activities for organized classes.

3. *Illustration of Organization.* Let us suppose that we have a Sunday school with six children who are four and five years of age and twelve children who are six, seven, and eight years of age. These eighteen children would all be in the Beginner-Primary Department, but could be divided into three classes—one class composed of the children four and five. This would be the Beginner class. Another class would be composed of the children six and seven years of age, and the third class would contain the children eight years of age.

Suppose we have twelve children in the Junior group. This group would be divided into two classes, one of boys and one of girls, or two classes of both boys and girls.

In none of these classes ought we to have more than ten pupils—eight would be much better.

Let us say that we have twenty-five pupils ranging in ages from twelve to seventeen. This group we can divide into four classes, two of boys and two of girls; or, if the ages and sex are not equally distributed, classes can be made up according to age.

When we come to the group of young people we can easily throw both sexes together and provide for a much larger class group. Fifteen or even twenty-five would form a most excellent young people's class. The adult group might be taught as one class or divided into two classes, one for men and one for women. Here we have planned the organization of a school of about ninety

that has recognized the four different groupings and has provided for the necessary classes within each group.

4. *Extension Work.* The school worthy of a name will want to reach out to those who are unable to attend its sessions. The babies who are too young to come should be placed on a Cradle Roll and recognized as members of the school. There are older persons who have to work on Sunday morning, some who are sick, and mothers who are kept at home with little children. All of these ought to be identified with their own group in the Sunday school, and each age group should make definite plans for enlisting and enrolling all the shut-ins and shut-outs as extension members of the school.

Progress and Promotion

1. *Need for Promotion.* The organization just outlined places the pupils in their proper group at a given time, but the boys and girls will insist upon growing, and this means that we must make provision so that at least once a year we can promote those who have outgrown a department into the next department. It is a serious defect in a school to fail to recognize that boys and girls are making progress in their Sunday school as well as in their day school. A temptation comes to many teachers to hold on to the older members of the class and add younger members as they come into the school. This causes the older pupils in the class to become dissatisfied. It has led many a boy and girl to quit coming to Sunday school at the earliest opportunity. This is particularly true when younger children come into the Junior group or when the Junior comes

into the Intermediate group. The Junior boy just does not want to be in the same class with little "kids," and an Intermediate pupil has a marked contempt for children of the Junior age.

2. *A Definite Plan for Promotion.* This calls for a systematic plan for promoting pupils from one age group to another as often as once each year. For illustration: If there should be fifteen children who are six, seven, and eight years of age at the beginning of the school year, by the beginning of the next school year a number of these would be nine years old. All such pupils, with rare exceptions, should be officially promoted into the Junior group. This will call for a reorganization of the whole school at the beginning of each school year.

3. *Promote the Pupil, Not the Teacher.* A very important point to be observed in promotion from one division to another is the rule that the pupil is to be promoted, not the teacher. Where a division has more than one class, it may be well to have the teacher start with the youngest class in that division and carry that class on to the next division; but here the teacher should stop and let the pupils go on. Circumstances may sometimes render it a wise plan to depart from this rule; but such departures should clearly be exceptions, and not the rule. We shall probably not go far wrong if we remember always that the school exists for the pupil, and not the pupil for the school. "The need of the pupil is the law of the school." In a matter of this sort the most interested parties are not always the wisest judges of what is best. It is possible for teachers

unconsciously to allow selfish motives to creep into their work. It is natural for a teacher to become greatly attached to a pupil who has been in her class a long time and has done good work, but a teacher's affection must not get in the way of fair treatment for the pupil. Symmetrical religious development requires that a pupil come under the influence of more than one Christian character, and the type of teaching and of personality that would be most helpful to a Beginner pupil might be wholly unsuited to the work of religious education for an adolescent. There are two advantages in changing teachers at least every three or four years: The pupil is more likely to be placed in contact with personalities best suited to his needs at different periods of growth, and the teacher becomes more efficient by repeating her work. If it is a good rule for a public school teacher to keep the same grade of work year after year, why is it not a good rule also for the Sunday school teacher?

4. *Time for Promotion.* It is usually best to have a definite day set aside for promotion, and this has come to be designated as "Promotion Day." The last Sunday in September has been found to be well fitted to this observance. Many Sunday schools begin the new school year on the first Sunday in October. Promotion should take place before the work of the new year begins. Nothing will inspire the pupil more than public recognition of the fact that he is making progress. Promotion Day will help to keep the school properly graded and tend to tie the pupils onto the organization for a long period of time.

Interesting exercises can be had at the eleven o'clock hour, and most pastors will be glad to assist in working out plans for the observance of the day and will take pleasure in awarding suitable certificates of promotion from department to department. Beautiful certificates can be had at a reasonable price and should be signed by the teacher, the superintendent, and the pastor. The public delivery of these certificates will add interest and dignity to the occasion. Such a service will give the pastor a splendid opportunity for magnifying the work of the Sunday school and will encourage the members to stay with their Sunday school work.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. What are some of the conditions to be considered in organizing the Sunday school?
2. What relation does the pastor sustain to the Sunday school?
3. What is the relation of the pastor to the officers and teachers?
4. What are some of the qualities of a good Sunday school superintendent? Of a good secretary? Of a good teacher?
5. Give some reasons why it is best to separate the school into groups according to age.
6. On this basis plan a proper organization for your own school.
7. Why is it necessary to provide for promotion in the Sunday school?
8. Name some reasons why the teacher should not be promoted with the pupil.
9. When is the best time to observe promotion, and why?

CHAPTER III

SELECTING AND TRAINING THE WORKERS

Workers Always Needed

An institution which carries on its work with voluntary help will always have the problem of a changing personnel. It is inevitable, therefore, that there should be constant changing among the officers and teachers of the Sunday school. People move out of the community, young people go away to college or to work, some are overtaken with sickness or misfortune, and some die. This makes it necessary for every Sunday school to have a definite policy for filling the places that are vacated. There is nothing more discouraging to a Sunday school class than to meet Sunday after Sunday without a regular teacher, and nothing will wreck the Sunday school quicker than to undertake to carry on the work with first one and then another serving as officers or teachers. That there will be vacancies must be a recognized fact, and plans should be made with this fact in mind. Vacancies in the Sunday school cannot be filled by wishing. "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride"; and if wishing would secure officers and teachers, we should always have an abundant supply. The only way to secure workers is to be constantly on the lookout for them and anticipate the needs of the school. A good teaching force does not just happen; it must be selected and developed.

Where Shall We Find Teachers?

1. *In the Community.* In every community where Sunday school workers are needed there are people who are capable of running the stores and shops, of serving as postmaster, civil officers, school-teachers, stewards, and trustees in the Church. During the World War we found that every community in America had in it people who could organize, who could sell liberty bonds, who could make speeches for the government, who could recruit soldiers—in fact, who could do all kinds of things. It is not that our communities are lacking in people capable of rendering service, but the failure lies in the fact that when we need folks to do religious work we have not searched them out, put the matter on their consciences, and challenged them with the opportunity of service. There are some people more gifted and better trained for religious leadership than others, but every Church and every community has many men and women capable of rendering a large and successful service. What needs to be done is to search them out and help train them for the task.

Among those who are the best equipped for working in the Sunday school will be the public school teachers. The great majority of these are devout and interested Christian men and women. The objection is sometimes raised that they are only in the community for eight or nine months; but even so, the special training that they have had for teaching makes it very desirable that they should be enlisted during the time that they are in the community. Better have first-class teaching eight or nine months in the year than to have only poor

or fair teaching for the twelve months. Every public school teacher who is a member of the Church ought to render service of the Church in the community where he teaches.

2. *In the Local Church.* Some years ago a speaker before a group of Sunday school workers made the statement that there was plenty of good material in every Church to carry on its work. A Sunday school superintendent challenged the statement and said: "That may be true of other Churches; it is not true here." He concluded his statement with the challenge that the speaker could stay in town for a whole week and not find a single person capable of teaching an adult class. The challenge was accepted. The pastor, the speaker, and the superintendent spent some time in the study of the Church roll and inquired into the possibilities of various persons. Some were investigated who had been members and regular attendants of the Church for a number of years. To the surprise of the superintendent, it was found in that small Church there were seven college graduates—three men and four women—not one of whom had ever been asked to take a Sunday school class. Four were selected and visited. Of these, two responded cheerfully to the challenge and said that they had ofttimes wished that they might render some such service. Several years have passed, and both of these are still teaching in that Church. One of them has built up a large adult class. There are such persons in almost every Church. They need to be interested, enlisted, and set to work.

3. *In the Homes of the Church.* A majority of those

who are active in the work of the Church to-day are people who were reared in the best Christian homes. Such homes are the logical places to look for young people to be enlisted for service. A superintendent once complained of the scarcity of teachers, and his pastor suggested to him that in his own home were two of the finest and brightest young people in the city and that these young people were all but losing interest in the Sunday school and Church because nothing had been provided for them to do—there was no place to work. Even their own father had failed to discover them. Our trouble is not so much in a shortage of prospects as in the fact that we have never systematically set about finding and enlisting them for service. In planning for the future be sure to look carefully among the sons and daughters that are in our Christian homes, who have had the background of a Christian home life. Select these and set them to a definite task.

Choosing the Workers

1. *Who Shall Be Chosen?* Who should be invited to become an officer or teacher in the Sunday school? This is a vital question. Surely not just anyone; for religion is caught as well as taught, and one cannot teach what one does not know. Religion is an experience, and one cannot fully teach anything that he has not verified. The teacher may teach about Christ; but if he is to teach Christ, he must live in fellowship with him. But many a person has grown cold in the religious experience because he has not been working at religion. One of the best ways to warm up a Christian experience

is to get to work at a Christian task. It is particularly true that young men and young women ofttimes drift away from Christ and the Church into worldly living because the Church has not afforded them an opportunity for service. Care should be exercised in choosing people who are too young. Teachers should be persons who have reached a degree of religious maturity that will enable them clearly to understand the Christian life. Boys and girls under sixteen years of age may well begin to prepare for teaching; but if they are ever to be successful teachers, it is at this period that they need to be in a class and not teaching a class. A good prospect for a teacher may easily be spoiled like the picking of unripe fruit before it is ready.

2. *How Shall We Extend the Invitation?* Shall we make a casual, indifferent call for volunteers, or shall the officers and teachers be hand picked, chosen for a particular task? The pastor and superintendent should select and carefully study prospective officers and teachers—visit with them and place before them the worth-whileness of the task. Never undertake to drive people to religion with the scourge of duty. Put it upon the high plane of Christian living and opportunity—let them know that their task will require work, patience, and time. A pastor was in search of a new superintendent and called upon a prominent business man in his community. This man was a university graduate and a born leader. The pastor opened the conversation by saying: "I have come to ask you to become superintendent of our Sunday school." The man replied: "I do not have time to devote to such a

great task as that." To this the pastor answered: "O, you need not worry. About an hour and a quarter of your time on Sunday is all that you need to give to it." "Well," said the man, "there are lots of men who could give one hour and a quarter a week; but if I should take the job, I would expect to give a good many hours every week to the task." This pastor made the fatal mistake of appealing to a big man by belittling a great task.

3. *Select for a Definite Task.* Whenever an invitation is extended to anyone to accept a position in the Sunday school it should be for a definite piece of work. Do you need a teacher for junior boys? Then look for some one capable of teaching junior boys and offer him that particular place. One of the most frequent mistakes is in calling for volunteers and setting them to a particular task without investigating their special fitness for that work. The majority of failures in Sunday school work lie just at this point. Willing persons have responded to an urgent call, but have not been put into the place where they could render their best service. Many teachers of little children would do much better work with older boys and girls, but when once assigned a task they do their best to fill it.

4. *Changing the Misfit.* What to do with those who are not in the right places in the Sunday school is a real problem that confronts every pastor and superintendent. It will require time, patience, and much prayer to readjust the organization in such a way that feelings will not be wounded and good people lost to the school. The best method of bringing about neces-

sary changes is for the pastor and superintendent to hold private interviews with the various teachers and frankly discuss their work with them. Many times, when the subject is brought up in a kindly way, the workers will volunteer the suggestion that another position would be more satisfactory, and frequently exchanges may be brought about between two or more officers or teachers that will be satisfactory to all parties and much improve the work of the school.

Electing or Appointing the Workers

1. *How Elected.* Each denomination has its own method for electing or appointing its officers and teachers. In the Methodist Church the superintendent is elected by the Quarterly Conference upon nomination of the pastor. In turn, the superintendent, after conference with the pastor and with his approval, nominates the other officers, who are elected in like manner by the Quarterly Conference. There should always be perfect accord between the pastor and superintendent, and personal feelings should not be allowed to enter into the selection of those who are to carry on so important a work as the Sunday school. These persons elected by the Quarterly Conference, together with the pastor and not more than three other persons, constitute the Sunday School Committee. Upon the nomination of the superintendent, the pastor concurring, this committee will elect the teachers and such other officers as have not already been elected. Many mistakes can be avoided if pastor, superintendent, and committee will give careful attention to this part of their work.

2. *Term of Office.* The position of an officer or teacher in a Sunday school is not a lifetime job. Each should be elected or appointed annually, though one may be reappointed from year to year. No person should consider it an offense if in the judgment of those who are responsible another person is selected to take his place or if he should be transferred to another task. Many persons are utter failures in some positions but still succeed admirably in others. One of the chief duties of the Sunday School Committee is so to place the officers and teachers that each may render his best service.

3. *Supplies.* Each person who holds a position in the Sunday school should have some other person ready to take his place in case of sickness or absence for other cause. For illustration: A superintendent can never tell when something will prevent his presence at Sunday school. He should have some one familiar with his duties to whom he can turn the affairs of the Sunday school over whenever necessary. It may be the pastor would be the proper person; but, better still, some young man in training for this particular service. In some of the older classes there are mothers and others who cannot serve as teachers regularly but who could be enlisted as substitutes or associate teachers to take the place of the regular teachers whenever absent. If the regular teacher expects to be absent, the substitute should be advised as far in advance as possible and have the opportunity of preparing the lesson and being ready for Sunday morning. The substitute or associate teacher has a very important position, and the

position should be magnified and due recognition given to those who render such service.

Preparing for Service

1. *Some One Responsible.* In the program of every Sunday school there should be some one definitely in charge of training work. This would mean that the school has a plan looking toward the continual improvement of the officers and teachers in service and a provision for the training of the young men and women who are to be the officers and teachers of to-morrow. Some one should have charge of training work. This may be the pastor, the superintendent, one of the officers or teachers, a public school teacher, or some other person especially fitted for the task. Training is not just for a few, but for every officer and teacher. The whole school should move forward together, and it can only go forward as its leaders are prepared for their tasks. By reading new and good books the officers and teachers can keep up to date on modern methods of Sunday school work, and each should read at least one approved book a year or take for credit one of the units in the training course. Those who are studying this text are complying with this useful provision. The reading or study of good educational books will be very helpful.

2. *Officers and Teachers Training Class.* For the officers and teachers in service a training class must be provided which will meet at some time during the week, but a class for young people can well be organized and taught during the Sunday school hour. There are

various methods of conducting training classes. Quite frequently it has been found a successful and very convenient method, when the pastor is leading the training class, to conduct it on the evening of the midweek prayer service, allowing about forty-five minutes to a devotional service and forty-five minutes to the study of some training text. Other schools have found another evening more convenient. It is customary to take one or two chapters for an evening's study, preparing the lesson before the class assembles, and then discussing it under the direction of a leader. Many classes have been successfully conducted as follows: Organize the class, order the textbooks, let each member of the class secure a copy of the book and read it, then meet each evening for a week under the direction of a leader for an intensive study and review of the text, and at the close of the review take the examination. Information about how to take the training course, secure the questions, and stand the examination may be had by communicating with denominational headquarters. There will always be some individuals who cannot take advantage of the class discussion and review, but who may meet the requirement of the program of work by taking the text for study and examination as an individual student.

3. *Class for Young People.* The teaching force is always changing. We must provide for a constant supply of new workers. Wise indeed is the pastor or superintendent who can see possibilities for service in his group of young people and begin to train them for it. A Sunday morning training class will be one excel-

lent way to prepare a group of young people to take the place of those who for any reason drop out.

Every Sunday school should have a select group of young people in training at all times.

4. *Training Schools.* Plans have been made whereby two or more schools on a circuit or in adjoining communities may unite in intensive study running over a period of a week, at which time two or more courses will be offered by capable instructors and the credits in the courses awarded. Where more than one subject is offered, students may have the privilege of choosing the unit which they will take. Such a school will create a fine spirit of fellowship and enthusiasm, and the inspiration that comes from a number of schools joining in such an undertaking cannot be overestimated.

For fuller information touching the training school, communicate with your Conference or State office or denominational headquarters.

5. *Training Day.* The importance of observing training day cannot be overemphasized. It serves two very excellent purposes. If the observance is to be at the eleven-o'clock hour, it brings to the attention of the entire Church membership the fact that the officers and teachers in the Sunday school are constantly equipping themselves for better service. It magnifies the work of the Sunday school as an educational agency and puts it upon the same plane as the work of the day school. To the pupil it brings a higher appreciation of the work that is being done by officers and teachers. It magnifies the importance of religious teaching. The proper observance of training day may also challenge

the attention and enlist for service some of the most capable people in the community. The very effort that is involved will create an interest upon their part.

The apostle in the long ago was right when he said: "Study to show thyself approved unto God." The biggest task confronting the Protestant Church to-day is the task of religious education. Many homes are dismally failing as agencies of religious education. In a democracy like ours the public school cannot adequately teach religion. Therefore upon the Church school rests the responsibility of the religious education of the childhood of to-day, and in doing this we are determining what the Church of to-morrow will be. It is a task worthy of our best efforts and the greatest investment of time and talent, and every Christian who can should engage in this great undertaking.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. Name some reasons why it is so hard to secure competent officers and teachers for the Sunday school.
2. Where must we secure workers for the local Sunday school?
3. Does the fact that our Sunday school officers and teachers are voluntary workers relieve them from the responsibility of securing the best possible preparation?
4. How should the officers of the Sunday school be chosen, and when?
5. How should the teachers be chosen, and for how long a period of service?
6. What should be done with the officer or teacher who neglects his work?
7. How may officers and teachers become better prepared?
8. Why is it important to have a training class composed of young people?
9. What value is there in observing a training day?

CHAPTER IV

THE WORKERS' COUNCIL

The Workers' Council Working Together

A seesawing team will never get the wagon out of the mire. It is only when they pull together that the wheels are made to turn. One of the reasons why there are so many mired Sunday schools the country over is because pastors, officers, and teachers do not understand the importance of teamwork.

The third point in the Program of Work for the small school, as set forth in Chapter I, reads as follows: "Workers' Council held monthly or quarterly; all teachers and officers attending regularly and making reports." This body is to the Sunday school what a board of directors is to a bank or to a business corporation. It is just what the name indicates, the workers taking counsel together on the plans and problems of the Sunday school. There are so many phases of work, so many problems that arise, and so many things to be done that it will require the combined wisdom and experience of all of those who are engaged at the task to do the work as it should be done. Every officer and teacher should be interested in the work of every other officer and teacher and thus interested in the whole program of the school. Sometimes there is found in the Sunday school the idea of individual ownership. The superintendent will speak of "my school" and undertake to run it as though he were the only

person concerned. There are teachers who look upon their classes as personal possessions and are willing to look out for the interests of their own classes, but they are not much concerned about the other classes in the school. Such attitudes upon the part of officers and teachers will not produce the best results. The work is so large that it requires the coöperative thinking and acting of every person involved. If the school is to run smoothly and progress is to be made, there must be teamwork.

Around the Workers' Council table every officer and teacher must feel perfectly free to make suggestions and criticisms and to offer plans that, in his judgment, would be good for the school. In such a frank and open conference some of the most valuable ideas and plans will be developed, ofttimes first suggested by one of the quiet members of the group. Superintendents are sometimes heard to complain that they do not have the whole-hearted support and coöperation of the pastor and of their teachers. It would be well for the complaining superintendent to ask himself: "Have I sought their coöperation, and have I taken them into my confidence in such a way as to secure their whole-hearted support?" Too often the difficulty lies in the fact that plans and programs are originated and handed down to be executed as though the superintendent were a military officer giving commands. The work of the Sunday school is upon a very different basis from that of an army. All of the officers and teachers are workers together with God. Sunday school workers will cheerfully coöperate in carrying out "our"

plans—that is, plans which they have had a part in making. They will be reluctant or indifferent in carrying out plans that have been handed down without consultation or conference.

The reasons for the Workers' Council may then be roughly summed up as follows:

1. It will create a spirit of fellowship and comradeship among the workers.
2. It will enable the workers to arrive at a common understanding of all the problems of the school.
3. It will enable each worker in the school to profit by the experience of the other workers.
4. It will enable the superintendent to plan a coordinated program for the whole school so that there shall be no confusion, conflict, or misunderstandings.
5. It will enable the workers to study their plan of organization and bring it into harmony with the standards that have been approved by successful Sunday school workers.
6. It will provide a means of personal development, fitting the worker for more effective service.

Who Are Members of the Workers' Council?

The Workers' Council is composed of the pastor, the superintendent, all the general officers of the school, all the teachers, and one representative from each of the groups of young people and adults.

Each person holding membership in this body upon which the success of the school so much depends should feel himself under obligation to attend regularly and take part in all of its meetings. One would not want

to keep his money in a bank if the board of directors never held a meeting to look over the books and check up on the work of the cashier and other officers. Such banks fail, and directors are always held responsible if they have neglected to perform their duties. Even a greater responsibility rests upon the members of the Workers' Council. Not material wealth, but the religious nurture of those who attend the Sunday school is involved. No teacher, officer, or pastor should ever criticize the work that is being done or complain about work that is not being done if he fails to attend and take part in the meetings of the Workers' Council.

When and Where the Council Shall Meet

Referring again to Section 3 of the Program of Work, we note the provision that the Workers' Council shall hold monthly or quarterly meetings. This does not mean that it meets the requirements to call a meeting at any time or place that the pastor or superintendent may desire. There must be a fixed time. Whether it be the first Monday or the last Friday in the month or any date between, it should be a definite date in the calendar. On a circuit where the pastor is present only once a month the Workers' Council might be held in connection with this monthly visit some evening or even on Sunday afternoon. If possible, the time of meeting should always be arranged so that the pastor can be present. He is a very important member of this body.

Before fixing the time of meeting it is well to have the matter fully and freely discussed and settled by a majority vote of all the members of the Council who are

present. Care should be taken to avoid dates in the calendar that are already occupied. Do not undertake to hold it on the evening that has been chosen for the meeting of some important lodge. Experience will show that first Monday is not a good time. It is too near the first of the month when many people are very busy. Do not attempt to hold the Workers' Council on the day that is used for picnics and celebrations or on the same date that the women hold their all-day missionary meetings. A date in the early or latter part of the month will be much preferable. Plans that are worked out will be fresher and more apt to succeed if put into operation immediately following their making.

When the date of the Council has once been set, let every member of the Council try to adjust his personal affairs and social engagements so that none of them will fall upon the evening that has been set aside for the monthly meeting of the Workers' Council. If this is consistently done, the Workers' Council will soon come to have a definite place in the calendar of every community.

It is usually the best policy, though not absolutely essential, to hold the meeting at the same place from month to month, and that place should be convenient to reach and centrally located. The natural place for the meeting will be the church, though some home may serve the purpose as well.

The Workers' Council Program

One of the surest ways to hold the interest of the members of the Workers' Council is to follow a care-

EVAN
L OF T

fully planned, instructive program. Set aside a definite period of time, not more than an hour and a half. It will usually take that long to carry out any constructive program. The workers are entitled to know how long this engagement will keep them, and the program must be worked out largely in the light of local conditions and needs. There are certain elements, however, that will need to enter into any well-balanced Workers' Council program.

1. There should be a devotional period led by the pastor or some other person who can conduct a fifteen-minute service of song and prayer, Scripture reading, or talk that will serve the purpose of deepening the religious life of the workers. It is a serious and important task to plan the Lord's work. It should be entered upon in a spirit of deep devotion.

2. One of the requirements of the Workers' Council is that the officers and teachers shall make reports. These reports should relate to the work committed to each person for the month past. The teachers will report upon their classes as to attendance, tardiness, preparation of the lesson, sickness in the home, or other items of interest to the whole group. The secretary and treasurer should make written reports to be read to the Council, showing the condition of the whole school as to attendance, receipts, and expenditures. Particular attention should be given to the treasurer's report in order that the workers may know the financial condition of the school. Many a Sunday school runs hopelessly into debt simply because the workers do not know that the collections have been too small to meet the

expenditures. Reports concerning literature and supplies and other needs of the Sunday school should be made to the Workers' Council.

3. Recommendations from the pastor, from the Sunday School Committee, and from the superintendent should be presented to the Council for full discussion. This will include laying the plans for special days, special features and added equipment, reorganization, additional finances, etc.

4. Some time should be given to the definite study of immediate problems, such as irregularity in attendance, tardiness, lack of interest, and other elements that help or hinder the work of the Sunday school.

5. Not the least among the features that should characterize a well-ordered Workers' Council should be a systematic study of some text in the Training Course. Some such unit as this book ought to be studied by every officer and teacher and thoroughly discussed before the group as a whole. Devoting thirty or forty minutes to the systematic study of such a text would in the course of twelve months complete the unit and prepare the entire group for taking an examination for credit in the Training Course. No one piece of work that can be done at the Council meeting can be more profitable than such systematic study.

6. The Workers' Council should deal with all problems of business that relate to the work of the Sunday school. The session of the school is not the proper time for a discussion of business matters, and sufficient time should be set aside in the program of each Workers'

Council meeting to give due consideration to all the interests of the Sunday school.

The above program is planned for a thoroughgoing piece of work by persons who are responsible for developing an efficient Sunday school. The success or failure of the Sunday school will largely depend upon the interest and devotion that is given to meetings of the workers. A frequent talking over together of common problems and ideals will soon develop a spirit of fellowship that will make itself felt in both the Sunday school and other departments of the Church. It will bring to all an enlarged vision of the opportunities that lie in the Sunday school. It will create a better understanding of problems common to all. It will in the end produce the kind of teamwork that will pull the load up the hill from the mire of the old-type Sunday school to the higher ground of the progressive Sunday school.

"Let every Sunday school have a Workers' Council with all officers and teachers meeting regularly."

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. What is the Workers' Council?
2. Who are members of the Workers' Council?
3. Name some of the things that can be accomplished by a Workers' Council.
4. Should there be a definite program for the Workers' Council meeting? Why?
5. Where and how often should the Workers' Council meet?

CHAPTER V

THE SUNDAY SESSION

When, and How Long?

The program of work for the small Sunday school fixes the minimum requirement for the Sunday session at one hour. It does not undertake to indicate the hour of the session, but does say that not less than sixty minutes should be devoted to it. It also points out that sufficient amount of time should be given to each of the two important factors that enter into the Sunday session—that is, not less than fifteen minutes for worship and thirty minutes for lesson study.

When we remember that there are thousands of Sunday schools that close their doors and go into winter quarters and that there are tens of thousands of Sunday school children who fall away from attendance during the midwinter and midsummer periods, we see how very important it is for the Sunday school that expects to do high-grade work to meet every Sunday for not less than one hour. Any Sunday school that will take the time and trouble to check up on itself and calculate the amount of time that is wasted by late comers, while classes are taking their places, by calling the roll, by making announcements, by general conversation, and other things that do not contribute either to worship or instruction will probably see that the average Sunday school pupil in the small school is getting not more

than fifteen or twenty minutes of actual instruction and very little of actual training in worship.

1. *Time of Meeting.* The best time for the Sunday session will be determined by local conditions. In some sections of the country Sunday schools meet at 10 A.M. In other sections the Sunday schools meet just after the morning service of the Church. And there are Sunday schools that meet later in the afternoon. Those who are responsible should determine upon a time that will be convenient to the largest number of people to be reached and when a full hour can be devoted to the session. It is not necessary that the Sunday school period shall come before the morning Church service, though this is the most popular hour for Sunday schools in the South.

2. *Begin and End on Time.* When the time has been fixed the session should begin on time, fully sixty minutes should be devoted to the work of the Sunday school, and it should end on time. If there is to be preaching at eleven o'clock, the session of the Sunday school should be so planned that its work will be completed before the time for the preaching service. The preaching service should not interfere with the Sunday school, neither should the Sunday school interfere with the preaching service. A good rule for every Sunday school, therefore, would be to *begin on time*, *run on time*, and *close on time.*

What Should Be Done at the Sunday Session

1. *What Should Not Be Done.* The Sunday session is not the time or the place for a music director or the

superintendent to display his ability in singing. The Sunday school must not be converted into a singing school. Whoever leads the singing should understand that he is not leading a concert, but a worship service. It is not the place for long talks or for extended announcements about strawberry festivals and quilting bees. The session may be presided over by the superintendent or by some other person, but it is not a time for personal display. It is not a time for the superintendent or the pastor to review the lesson. Teachers have been selected to do the teaching of the school; and if they have properly done their work, the lesson review before the entire school is not needed. If teachers are not properly doing their work, the remedy lies in toning up the teaching staff. In any event, since different departments in every Methodist Sunday school are now using different Bible passages for lesson study, no review of the lesson can reach the entire school, and taking time to review a lesson that has been studied by only a section of the school is bound to prove demoralizing. The morning session is not the time or place for drill, and only on special occasions should readings and recitations be allowed.

2. *What Should Be Done.* Since we have just indicated what the Sunday school session is not, let us now consider what it is. It has two primary purposes, to worship and to give instruction. Other elements will enter into the session—such as fellowship, service through giving, and an occasional brief announcement—but the real business of the Sunday session is to instruct and to train in worship. The full meaning of these

ministries of the Sunday school will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Preparing for the Session

1. *Church in Proper Condition.* First of all, the building should be clean and comfortable. Many Sunday schools are driven into winter quarters because no one seems responsible for seeing that the church is properly heated in advance of the session. During the winter months some one should see that fires are built early on Sunday morning so that the building will be comfortable when pupils begin to arrive. The church should also be swept clean and dusted, the songbooks kept in place ready for distribution, the seating properly arranged, and everything in readiness. The house of God should be made ready for a service of worship and instruction. This does not mean that the superintendent should do all this work, but he should feel responsible for having things in readiness for those who are to be present in the Lord's house and service. Officers and teachers should arrive ten or fifteen minutes before the hour set for opening. Most of the trouble from the late arrival of pupils is due to the bad example of tardy teachers.

2. *A Definite Program.* A successful Sunday session cannot be conducted with a hit-and-miss program. The superintendent should come to the morning service with a well-prepared program before him that will enable him or some other person to conduct a real service of worship, to make the necessary announcements at the proper time, and to protect the period of instruction

from needless interruptions. The session that will interest the pupils is the session for which preparation has been made.

3. *Good Order.* No matter how well prepared the program may be, the whole school must realize that the service is being held on the Lord's day and in the Lord's house. If other than a church building is used, the pupils should be impressed with the fact that for that hour the building is dedicated to the service of God. If officers and teachers in the Sunday school could come to a full realization of this, it would transform the opening exercises of the Sunday school into a real service of worship. The conduct of the officers and teachers will have much to do with the spirit of the session. If they come to the service in a hilarious, joking, laughing frame of mind, the pupils will imitate their conduct. The Sunday session is not the time for gossip, for the telling of jokes, or for general visitation. This is the time for wholesome Christian fellowship, for worship and study. During the entire session of the school every teacher should be seated with his class and should assist in preserving order for the whole school.

It is not to be understood from what we have just said that the Sunday session is to be a sad, solemn occasion or that the superintendent is to wear a long face. Rather it is to be an occasion of gladness and joy. Happiness should abound, but the service should be dignified and one worthy to be held in the Lord's house and in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Master.

4. *No Need for Closing Exercises.* If there is a real program of worship conducted at the opening of the

school, or if the school has been separated into groups, as it should be if at all possible, there will be little necessity for a closing exercise other than for the reassembling of the school for an orderly dismissal. Classes need not move from their places if they are in a one-room church. The closing should be very brief, wasting no time for reports, announcements, or business, but should consist of nothing more than a song or a prayer or any very brief statement that may be necessary. Whatever announcements are to be made should be as brief as possible and made between the worship service and the time that classes are assembled for instruction. Do not require pupils to move any oftener than necessary. Each movement means a waste of time and a diversion of attention.

To sum up: Let every Sunday school hold a session every Sunday in the year, and let a minimum of sixty minutes be devoted to the session. *Begin on time, waste no time,* and *close on time.*

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. In your Sunday school how much time is given to worship? How much time is actually devoted to teaching? How much time is wasted in getting quiet or going to classes or making reports?
2. Why should the Sunday school run on a definite schedule?
3. Is it important to begin and close the Sunday school session at a definite time? Why?
4. Why is it well to prepare a written program for the Sunday session?
5. Name some things that should be done before the school opens on Sunday morning.
6. Does your session open with a quiet and orderly service?
7. What can be done to improve the opening service?

CHAPTER VI

WORSHIP AND TRAINING IN WORSHIP

Definition of Worship

The instinct of worship is as old as the human race. Every religion has its forms and ceremonies through which the people pay homage to their deity. In heathen religions worship is prompted by a sense of fear, a desire to placate the wrath of the gods. True Christian worship is prompted by love, reverence, and adoration. To the Christian worship is more than merely thinking about God or feeling reverent toward him or even seeking to do his will; it is a personal approach to God. Public worship is association, fellowship, and communion; a means of developing the sense of gratitude, praise, thanksgiving, adoration, respect, love, and sympathy. We may bow the head or bend the knee, close the eyes and move the lips, and go through every form of worship, and yet not be engaged in real worship. The heathen does all of these things when he pays homage to his gods of wood or stone or brass. God is a spirit and must be worshiped in spirit and in truth. Some one has defined the functions of a service of public worship to be "to develop a certain feeling or attitude and to prepare the people for the teaching message."

Training in Worship

We teach our children how to eat correctly, how to read and write, how to speak, and how to sing, but few

of them have been taught anything about the meaning and forms of worship. Realizing the importance and place of worship in religious development, Sunday school leaders everywhere are agreed that a definite part of the Sunday morning program should be given over to worship and training in worship. The Program of Work provides that there shall be "a regular program of worship arranged in advance and conducted in a quiet atmosphere. Songbooks approved by the General Sunday School Board." The provision indicates some of the essentials for such a service. The prearranged program, the quiet atmosphere, the right kind of songs —these are all important.

Training in worship should include the learning of great hymns, the reading of Scripture, the memorizing of prayers, and the correct use of these in the worship service. When suitable materials have been selected the pupil will learn to worship by using such materials in a genuine worship service under the direction of devout and reverent leaders.

1. *Separate Rooms.* In the chapter on "Organization" attention was called to the need of separating the Sunday school into groups, such as the Beginner-Primary, Junior, Intermediate-Senior, Young People, and Adults. This plan is of special value when we come to the matter of worship. There are few Churches that cannot make at least some provision to care for the younger groups separate from the older members of the Sunday school who must assemble in the main auditorium. A small room might be built to the rear of the church or rented in some near-by house, or as

a last resort in the summer they might assemble under the shade of a tree or in a tent. If the Church is to train its young children in worship, using songs that they can understand and simple, childlike prayers, it will readily be seen that some provision must be made for them to have a separate service of worship.

2. *A Program Suited to the Age Group.* The form and materials to be used with the little children in a worship service must be such as they can understand. The worship program must be related to their childish experiences, and the services must be conducted in the simple language that they speak.

Objection is sometimes raised by adults that they do not want to lose the inspiration that comes from the children's singing with the adults; but remember, our purpose is to minister to the needs of the child and not to amuse or entertain the elders. Every father and mother who will stop and think will readily see that the child can be taught to sing and to engage in worship in his own childish way far better if left with his own group. It is the welfare of the child which we must always consider and for which we must always plan. His religious development is the matter of first importance. Let us then make provision for the younger groups so that they have a worship service that is particularly suited to their needs.

The need for a suitable program also holds in the case of the young people and the adults who must worship together. The program should be arranged with the whole group in mind, and opportunity should be given for the younger members of the group to have a

definite part in the service. The superintendent may or may not be responsible for the worship service. In many schools there are persons other than the superintendent who can prepare and conduct an excellent worship program. In the Sunday school literature appears from time to time an abundance of helpful and suggestive material that will assist those who are responsible for the preparation of the services of worship.

3. *A Central Theme.* The program of worship should be built about some central theme, so that there may be unity of thought running throughout the Scripture reading, the prayers, and the songs. Such themes as "Gratitude," "Thanksgiving," "Praise," "Love," "Patriotism," "Friendship," and the topics suitable for special days may be used more than once. Whoever is to lead the service of worship should give the matter careful study and should come to the Sunday school hour with his program ready. All persons who are to assist in the program should be advised beforehand as to what they will be expected to contribute to the service.

Conditions of True Worship

1. *Physical Surroundings.* There are many elements that enter in a real worship service. One of the first steps should be to secure proper physical conditions. Some one should be responsible for seeing that the place where the service is to be held is comfortable, that there is proper ventilation, that the room is properly lighted, that the floors are clean and the dust removed from the chairs and the piano—in fact, that all physical surround-

ings are made as attractive and comfortable as possible. It is important that all the hymn books be properly distributed, the organ or piano in place and ready for use, and, if in the winter, to see that the fire has had attention so that it will not be necessary for some one to stir it or put on more fuel during the service.

2. *Order.* There must be quiet and attention if a real service of worship is to be observed. These cannot be had by the superintendent pounding upon a bell or having the pianist play loud chords in an effort to drown out the noise and confusion, as has sometimes been done. Before worship is begun all conversation, walking about, and other such disturbing elements should cease. The best way to maintain quiet and reverence is for the superintendent, the officers, and the teachers to set a good example. It may require some time and patience to get the entire group into the habit of becoming quiet at the opening of the worship service; but only when quiet has been secured and everything is in order and readiness should the service or worship begin. Quietness upon the part of the leader or soft music will serve as the best means of securing order for the beginning of the service.

3. *Reverence.* There is no need for a worship service to be sorrowful and depressing, but it must be remembered that it is a service to do homage to God in his house and on his holy day. The service may be ever so joyous, glad, and happy; but the presence of God cannot be felt in a noisy, "jazzy" type of program. Every effort should be made to impress the group with the fact that when we sing we are singing to the

SCHOOL OF

glory and honor of God; that when we read the Scriptures we are listening to his voice as he speaks to us through his word, and that we should be still and listen while God speaks; that in the prayers we are talking with God, and that it should be done with becoming dignity and humility. The service should express a spirit of gratitude to God for the favors that he has shown and should help us to realize that God is really approached by us in the service. There should be no telling of flippant stories. From the beginning to end, nothing should be allowed that would tend to destroy the real atmosphere of worship.

Materials to Be Used in Worship

The worship service is made up of many elements: music, instrumental or vocal; the reading of Scriptures; prayers, individual and in concert; stories that illustrate a good moral or teach a lesson. Sometimes there will be a talk upon the theme of the service, and giving should by all means be made a part of worship.

1. *Music in Worship.* Why do we use music in the worship service? Is it merely to put "pep" into the program? Do we sing the first hymn for the purpose of getting the crowd quiet? Do we start the singing to bring the outsiders inside? Do we sing several songs for the purpose of giving the late comers a chance to get into the room so that the superintendent may safely say, "The teachers will now take charge of their classes"? Do we sing just because it is a custom? Do we sing to introduce variety in the program? What is the real purpose that we have in using music?

Music of some sort is used in most every service of worship, and the kind of music that is used will largely determine the spirit of the service. In all ages and with all races music has been connected with the worship of deity. It is the truest expression of the religious ideal of a people. The music used in a Sunday school should be such as to inspire and give expression to the spirit of worship. Can God be pleased with an effort to worship him in "ragtime"? True worship is marked by a spirit of gratitude, humility, and love, and it is rendered in the spirit of gladness and joy. If music is to produce a real spirit of worship, it must express such feelings, it must help to develop such attitudes. Both the words and the tune must have a tendency to draw the mind and soul of the individual up and out toward God.

Hymns have long been used in worship. The Psalms constituted the Jewish hymn book. The leaders of the Protestant Reformation read and sung great hymns. Charles Wesley wrote more than six thousand hymns, and these hymns have meant more to the spiritual life and unity of the Church than any collection of sermons or treatise on theology that was ever written. The hymns and tunes must produce a worshipful attitude or aspiration.

Can we afford to use anything else but the very best in the worship of God? In the neglect of the great old hymns of Christianity the Church is suffering a great loss. A spiritual blight is falling upon the life of the childhood and youth of to-day through the cheap, tawdry, popular songs that are being "jazzed" in thousands of Sunday schools and many Church services.

The passion for buying music just because it is cheap or easy to learn has flooded our Churches with an abundance of trashy songs. Most of the cheap songbooks are published for "revenue only," to enrich the purses of the music publisher and the book dealer, and are sold regardless of the effect they may have upon the religious development of childhood and youth. The Church owes it to its children to protect them from "trashy songs." The great hymns of Christendom, that have led men to God and that have refined and beautified religious experience, were not written at so much per copy, but are the expression of the deep experiences and lofty faith and spiritual longings of their authors. Shame upon the Church or Sunday school that debases the worship service by the use of trashy music! No matter what the sentiment or language, lofty emotions are not produced by any combination of words or sentiments set to such tunes as "I Wish I Was Single Again." There is a universal complaint that congregational singing is dying out. The reason for this tendency is that we have not been training our people to sing the great hymns of the ages.

For the children in the Beginner-Primary group there should be specially selected songs that will meet their needs and are written in language they understand and set to music they can sing. Collections of such songs are found in "Songs for the Little Children," "Songs for Little People," "Melodies," and "Carols." For the Junior children there are many great hymns that are meaningful and suitable for use in the worship services. What loftier sentiments or nobler aspira-

tions than those to be found in such great hymns as "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "Nearer, My God, to Thee," "The Son of God Goes Forth to War," "Lead On, O King Eternal," "Worship the King," "Joy to the World," "Come, Thou Almighty King," "Onward, Christian Soldiers," "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies." There are hundreds of such hymns that ought to be used in every Sunday school. Such hymns build character, strengthen faith, and draw the mind and heart toward God.

2. *Scriptures.* All those in the Sunday school who can read should be encouraged to bring their Bibles so that the Scripture lesson that is used for the worship service may frequently be read from the Bible itself. We must never let the lesson literature supplant the use of the Bible, else our children will be taught to search the Scriptures, not by books and chapters, but by the dates on the calendar. The lesson selected for the worship service should not only be appropriate as to occasion and season, but also be one that has rhythm and so lends itself to reading responsively. The Psalms are well adapted to this kind of use. The Scriptures need not always be read responsively. It may be read in concert, by an individual who reads well, or alternately by various groups. But, in whatever way the Scripture is read, let the spirit be devout. When we open our Bible and read from it, we are listening to a message from God. We should read or listen to it with reverence.

3. *Prayers.* True prayer is communion with God. God does not hear us for our much speaking. Public prayer should not be uttered in a strained voice as

though God were so far away we have to shout at him. On the other hand, the prayers should not be mumbled or spoken so indistinctly that no one can hear. Public prayer should as far as possible utter the emotions and needs of all those present. The leader of such prayer should have the whole group in mind and should ask for the things that will meet the needs of that particular group. The person who knows in advance that he is to lead a group in public prayer should think carefully and well before he begins to pray in order that he may really lead his hearers in prayer.

4. *Stories and Talks.* Many times stories can be told in connection with the worship service that will illustrate the main thought that is followed both in the Scripture reading and the hymns. If a story is told, let it be brief and to the point and in harmony with the theme of the worship service. In a service of fifteen minutes there is little time for either stories or talks. If a talk is to be made upon any subject, it should contribute to the creation of a worshipful atmosphere. The worship period is not a proper time for a display of gifts of oratory.

The worship program should be so arranged that it may be carried forward without confusion; and if there is a story or talk, it should be so placed in the program that it will not eclipse the other valuable elements in the service. The good effect of many an opening service in the Sunday school has been killed by the superintendent's remarks or comments. In other words, many a worship service has been literally talked to death.

5. *Giving.* Giving should be made a part of the wor-

ship service. Very beautiful and impressive services may be held in connection with the birthdays of the pupils or on Missionary Sunday. To give money for the advancement of the kingdom of God is as truly an act of worship as to sing or pray. A brief prayer consecrating the money that has been given to any cause will help to develop the spirit of consecration in the lives of the pupils.

6. *Helps.* There are many little books published that contain suggestive worship programs for the various age groups in the Sunday school. Some of our Sunday school literature contains helpful suggestions from month to month which can be used by the superintendent or the leader of worship in improving this service. Let us remember that whatever we may be able to teach about God and about worship, the most valuable service we can make to the growing pupil is to lead him to realize the constant presence and fellowship of God.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. What is the difference between an opening exercise and a worship service?
2. What are some of the elements that enter into a worship service?
3. Why is a quiet, reverent atmosphere needed for true worship?
4. Is it necessary to prepare a program of worship? Why?
5. Where the whole school meets together, is it possible to meet the need of all ages at once? Why?
6. Give some reasons why good hymns and good music should be used by the Sunday school?

CHAPTER VII

WHAT TO TEACH—LESSON COURSES

EVERY Sunday school should use the lessons prepared under the direction of the Sunday School Board of its own denomination or such lessons as are approved by that Board. The reason for this suggestion is a perfectly good one. If denominational existence is at all justifiable, then the denomination is responsible for the kind of lessons that are to be studied by its Sunday school pupils. The denominational editor has been selected because of his knowledge of the needs of the pupils in the Sunday schools of that denomination. In the selection of the lesson material he tries to meet these needs.

Another good reason is that if our boys and girls are to become loyal members of the Church, pastors, superintendents, and teachers should set the example for them by loyalty to their own Church and its constituted authorities. This does not mean that the literature published under the direction of our Sunday School Editor and issued by our Publishing House is in any sense partisan or sectarian, but it does mean that the lesson topics that have been selected by the International Lesson Committee are given a treatment and interpretation in harmony with the ideals of Methodism. It is the duty of the editor to see that no objectionable teaching is published in the lessons.

The teacher in the average Sunday school accepts the literature that is given to him from month to month

by the superintendent or secretary and never raises a question as to whether this literature has been provided by the Sunday School Editor or whether it is particularly adapted to the needs of the pupils or whether it is the best that can be had. He expects those in authority to make such decisions for him. He takes it for granted that those who are primarily responsible for the purchase of the literature have gotten the best there is. Sometimes superintendents of an economical turn of mind will purchase literature simply because of its cheapness, but this is not fair to the pupils. Quality and not cost should be our guide in choosing lesson materials that are to be used in forming the moral characters and religious faith and ideals of our pupils. Just as we select the choicest food for our children's bodies, so should we select the choicest of spiritual food with which their religious life is to be nurtured.

Sometimes a Sunday school teacher complains that the lessons which have been provided for her class are too hard for them to understand, are such that no interest can be created, and in language too difficult for pupils. Whenever such a condition is found, it is very evident that the literature is not suited to the needs of that group of pupils.

Sunday school literature should also be of attractive appearance. Cheap literature will naturally give to the pupil the idea that religion is a cheap affair.

Some Elements of Good Lessons

1. *They Must Be Suited to the Child.* The pupil is central in our program, not the Bible nor the Church.

These both exist for the sake of the pupil. We must not try to twist the child to suit the Scripture or other lesson material, but should select the Scripture to suit the needs of the child. When a child first starts to day school, the teacher does not place him in the sixth or eigth grade, no matter how bright he may be or how large his body, but he is placed in a class where the lessons are in keeping with his mental development, where the words and figures are such as he can understand. This same principle holds true in teaching religion. The pupil must be started with simple, plain truths that can be understood by him and related to his everyday experience and meet his present needs.

2. *Must Be Based on Present Knowledge.* The first lessons must be based on what the child already knows. It is a well-established law of learning that we acquire something new only when we can tie it onto something already known. Jesus illustrated this principle in all his teachings. Every time he taught or preached he used the most commonplace illustrations, such as leaven, ground, seed, sowing, and reaping. These were things that every one knew about. Jesus therefore started with this common knowledge of the people and talked to them in language that they understood. He was thus able to lead them from what they knew to the great new truths that he came to teach. Sunday school lessons that bring to the little child things with which he is not familiar and that he cannot understand teach him nothing. This accounts for the fact that so many children spend many years in Sunday school and acquire very little religious knowledge.

3. *Must Be Interesting.* The best lessons will be selected not only with the need of the pupil in mind and suited to his knowledge and told in language with which he is familiar, but they must also be of interest to him. A great teacher once said: "It is only where we touch the interest of life that we can be said to teach at all." Religious truth, like other truth, becomes a part of us only when it attracts our interest. The best Sunday school lessons should be so selected that they will be interesting to the pupil at each age of his development. To illustrate: A very young child will be interested in stories of other babies, and we speak of the *baby* Moses, the *baby* Jesus; but when he is a little older he thinks in terms of *boys*. Then we speak of the *boy* Samuel, the *girl* Ruth, the *boy* Jesus. There is a common point of sympathy. The child is interested in others of his own age, and so he becomes interested in these great characters. It is a mistaken notion that by compelling boys and girls to memorize long, hard passages of Scripture we make them grow religious. We might as well feed beefsteak and pickles to a baby with the idea that some day when he is older he will need them. What we have said about interest simply means that a child, like a grown person, will do his best work when he is interested.

4. *Must Provide for Growth.* Lessons must be selected not only to suit the needs of the pupil at a particular period, but must be so arranged as to keep up with his growth. One of the serious defects of any uniform series of lessons lies in the fact that they cannot take into account the principle of growth. A certain

passage of Scripture is chosen, and all the pupils of all ages must study that same passage. In the beginning the vocabulary of the pupils is limited; but as his experience widens and he grows older his vocabulary will increase, and the lessons must be selected so that they will meet this changing condition. They must tie onto what the pupil had yesterday and look forward to what he will have to-morrow.

Lessons now used in many of our Sunday schools do not take into account the capacity or needs or the experience of the individual pupils. They are usually selected with the adult in mind; and if an effort is made to adapt them to children, the meaning of the lesson is often changed or lost. An illustration of this is found in a lesson that recently appeared for pupils of all ages. It was taken from the First Book of Kings, second chapter, and beginning with the tenth verse. Let the readers of this book turn to their Bibles and read the remainder of this chapter, then ask the question, Would it be possible for a six-year-old child to get any religious benefit from the study of this lesson? It would be just as reasonable to take the six-year-old child in the day school and ask him to solve a problem in algebra or geometry. The best lesson for a six-year-old child will start with him where he is, use the story form of teaching, and present only such portions of the Scripture and other material as will be suited to his mind at that age.

Sources of Lesson Material

Most of the lesson materials for our Sunday schools are taken from the Bible. This is the great source

book for religious teaching. It gives us the record of God's dealing with his peculiar people and tells us the story of the difficulties of these people in their search for God. In the New Testament we have a record of the coming of God's Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, the story of his life, teaching, and ministry, and of the beginning of the early Church. The Bible is and always will remain the book of books for Christian study. It must be remembered, however, that it was written centuries and centuries ago in an Eastern land and that in order to make it understandable for us in the Western world it must be interpreted in terms of our life and experience. We should add to the Biblical material studies about the beautiful world in which we live and take illustrations from nature so that our children may come to see that God is at work in his world to-day. We can well add to our material as the pupils grow older studies of the lives of great Christian leaders such as Luther, Wesley, Carey, Morrison, and Lambuth. Such studies will furnish an inspiration and assist in the building of character just as truly as studies of the lives of Abraham and Moses. They have been messengers of God, men through whom God has spoken to the modern world. The great hymns of Christendom and beaut ful pictures that have been inspired by lofty, Christian ideals may well be added to the material that is to be used for teaching religion to childhood and youth. If in early life we can lead the pupil to see God in his wonderful gifts and wonderful works and later to see him as he lives in the lives of great men and good women who have heard his voice

and known him, we shall have little danger of seeing this pupil enshrouded in the mists of doubt in later years.

Various Kinds of Lessons

Sunday school lessons that have been planned and prepared with the various age groups in mind are called "graded lessons." These are of two types. One kind are called "closely graded lessons." These are prepared for larger Sunday schools which have enough pupils to form one or more classes for each year of life up to adulthood.

For Sunday schools of not more than 150 members provision has been made in the "group uniform lessons." For example, children four and five years old are called Beginners, and for this entire group in both large and small schools a two-year cycle of lessons has been planned which in schools of only one class of Beginners are to be used in rotation, one course for this year and the other for next year and then repeat, since every Beginner child will pass out of this department at the end of two years from the time he enters, it being assumed that children under four will be on the Cradle Roll, and if they are brought to Sunday school at all will belong to a separate Cradle Roll class. But from the time pupils leave the Beginners' Department the "group uniform lessons" are quite distinct from the closely graded lessons.

The Primary Department consists of children six, seven, and eight years old, and the lessons for this department are arranged in three-year cycles, so that a pupil passing through this department will not have

the same lesson twice unless there should be some error on the part of those ordering the literature.

The same provision is made for pupils in the Junior Department (ages 9, 10, 11, and possibly 12), and it is hoped that we shall soon have similar group lessons for the Intermediates and Seniors. At present in the small school these are all shut up to a uniform lesson or the closely graded lessons, but the treatment in the uniform lesson is adapted as far as possible to the different age groups to be served. Group lessons have been prepared especially for those schools that for any reason cannot use the closely graded lessons. The latter are to be preferred even in small schools where conditions are such that it is possible to make proper use of them.

With the group lessons the Beginners in a Sunday school will be studying one lesson, the Primaries another, the Juniors another, and so on through all the departments, thus recognizing all the principles that are involved in graded lesson material as far as it can be provided with a small group. The Sunday school that loves its children and wishes to see them nourished as Jesus intended that they should be nourished will no longer insist upon the same lesson for all members of the school, but will see to it that lessons suited to the needs of the various ages are selected.

The needs of the older groups in the Sunday school have not been overlooked, and elective courses have been prepared so that the young people in adult classes desiring to make special studies are permitted to do so. These elective courses will sometimes consist of an intensive study of a particular book of the Bible, the

social teachings of Jesus, the meaning of Christian service, or some similar topics. Information concerning elective courses can be had by communicating with the Young People's or Adult Department of our General Sunday School Board.

Other Reading Matter

We are living in a reading age. Newspapers, magazines, and periodicals of all descriptions are circulating in the homes of our people at the rate of millions of copies every week. Very little of this reading matter is of religious value. Newspapers are filled week after week with stories of crime, infidelity in marriage, and all forms of lawbreaking. Our young people are having their minds stored with all sorts of trash from the daily press. It should be the business of the Church and of the Christian home to see to it that every child and youth is provided with clean, wholesome, interesting, religious literature. The Sunday School Board of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, realizes the importance of this kind of literature in the hands of its constituency and is undertaking to meet the desires of Sunday school pupils for good reading matter with a series of publications suited to the various ages. For children under ten years of age, there is an interesting little paper entitled *Boys and Girls*. The stories and illustrations are of a character to meet the religious needs of boys and girls of tender years. For the boys from ten to seventeen years of age, there is published a real boys' paper, called *The Haversack*, and for girls of the same age a paper that carries the title *The Torch-*

bearer. These two papers are prepared upon the plane of natural interests of early youth. For the young people there is published each week a paper, entitled *Our Young People,* which is filled with reading matter of special interest and value to them. The Sunday school can make no better investment than to see to it that every pupil in the school is provided each week with a copy of one of these periodicals. They may be as important in the life of the pupil as the regular Sunday school lessons. These papers are issued weekly and should be ordered with the regular Sunday school supplies.

In addition to the above, every Methodist home should be provided with a copy of the Conference organ and the Nashville *Christian Advocate.* Through these periodicals the children will come to know something of the program of the great Church to which they belong. They will in time become familiar with the names of the great leaders of the Church and know something of how the work of the Church is done. Any home that can afford to subscribe for a weekly newspaper cannot afford to be without the Church papers.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. Why is it necessary to grade the lesson material?
2. Give some of the elements of a good lesson.
3. Why should the lessons make provision for progress?
4. From what source do we get the most of our lessons in the Sunday school? Why?
5. When nature stories are used why are they so interesting to little children?

CHAPTER VIII

THROUGH THE WEEK

We Learn by Doing

Religion is not something that concerns us on Sunday alone, and the teaching of religion requires much more time than the thirty minutes that is usually given on Sunday morning. Teaching religion is something more than giving instruction. The accumulation of Biblical facts and figures and the memorizing of passages of Scripture are only a part of religious training. It used to be thought that teaching was confined to instruction alone, but we have come to know that instruction is only a part of the teaching process. We learn by doing. James, one of the New Testament writers, appreciated the importance of this truth and gave some very sound advice to the early Christians in the following words: "But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding your own selves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." (James 1: 22-24.) A child might learn ever so many passages of Scripture; but if all he did was to learn them, it would be like looking at himself in a mirror, the impression would not last much longer. If the truths that we teach on Sunday are to become of permanent value to the pupil, we must assist him to live these truths. We not

only learn that we may do, but in doing we learn. The story of the Good Samaritan is one that probably is taught to every Sunday school pupil in America. The reason so many fail to become Good Samaritans themselves is because we have not helped them to carry the truth over into their daily living. It is not what the pupil knows that is of greatest importance, but what he does and what he is. The purpose of imparting knowledge is to help the pupil to do and to be. Teaching is not to be made an end in itself but a means to an end, and the end that we seek is right living.

Religion Is Life

Religious teachings must be related to life, not on Sunday morning alone at the Sunday school hour, but all through the week and in all the duties and relations of everyday life. The life of a child is in his play. His relationships are his toys, his pets, his games, and the members of the household. His early life is largely spent in the home or in his immediate community. If we are to teach religion to this child, it must be of such a nature and in such a way that it can be related to his life in the home, to his pets, his playmates, and the games he plays. Religious truths should teach him to play right, to treat his pets and playmates as they should be treated. The child can only learn when we teach him something that is related to his present experiences. If we would have him to grow up to be kind and generous, we must help him to learn to be kind and generous to his pets and his playmates. This means that the Sunday school officer and teacher must

devote a part of his work to helping his pupils to become doers of the word.

A Through-the-Week Program

In the light of what has just been said, it is very evident that the Sunday school officer and teacher who would measure up to the opportunity that is offered in this field of Christian service must plan for some sort of contact with their pupils through the week. We mean by this that there should be expressional activities through which the pupils may be helped to carry the Sunday teaching into their everyday life. Some of the week-day activities will involve the whole school, but the responsibility for the larger part of it will fall upon the teacher who has the most intimate contact with the members of the class. The teacher should have an intimate knowledge of the things that are of interest to his pupils, the games they play, and the forms of social life in which they engage. In the open country where the membership of the school extends over much territory the week-day work will of necessity be different from what it is in the small town; and yet with the rural telephone, with the improved road conditions, and with the automobile there is no reason why the teacher in the most sparsely settled section of the country cannot maintain some sort of contact with the pupils through the week. It is during the week that the officer and teacher will be able to help pupils to learn and to live the religious life. The week-day interests of the pupil will include all sorts of outdoor games, hikes or hunts, nature studies, picnics, and

parties. The age and inclination and living conditions of the pupils will largely determine the week-day activities.

1. *Play and Recreation.* The teacher who really teaches must have an interest in the things which interest the pupil. As soon as the pupils come to feel that the teacher is interested in their lives they become interested in the teacher and a bond of sympathy and mutual understanding is established. In making this contact through a common interest the teacher does his best teaching. One of the surest ways of securing attention to the Sunday lesson is to give attention to the pupil when engaged in play.

A teacher of a group of junior boys discovered that her boys were interested in marbles—most boys are. She discovered further that they were playing marbles for "keeps" and that in the excitement of the game they were coming to use some very bad language. She began to talk with the boys about the game of marbles, asked many questions as to the rules of the game and how it was played, finally requesting that they should teach her how to play. A vacant lot near her home was cleared off, and on it was prepared an excellent place for playing marbles. By frequent visits to this marble ground, and by showing an interest in the game and in the improvement of the boys in their playing she was able by her presence and influence both to break the habit of playing for "keeps" and the use of bad language. A year of Sunday teaching on the subject of playing marbles for keeps and the use of bad language would not have been half so valuable as the week-day visits to

the marble ground. Who will say that her teaching on the marble ground was not true religious teaching?

2. *Games, Hikes, and Hunts.* A Sunday school teacher who made a large contribution to the religious life of a group of growing boys was a man without very great intelligence and with only ordinary education. The members of his class remembered little that he taught them on Sunday morning, but once during each month while he was teacher of that class he gathered his boys about him for some intimate contact. It was, perchance, a party in his home, a hike in the woods, a trip to the old swimming hole, a fishing party, and once a year a camping trip; just teacher and boys, two weeks in the woods, hunting, fishing, forming friendships and contacts that have lasted for a lifetime. After twenty-five years the members of that class never come together without commenting upon the influence of that Sunday school teacher. He was interested in the things that interested his boys. Every member of that class became interested in the things that are eternal largely because their teacher was interested in these higher things of life.

A city-raised young man just out of college secured a position as teacher in a country school far removed from a railroad. On his first Sunday at the country church he was asked to take a class of boys ranging from twelve to sixteen years of age with the interesting information that all their teachers up to that time had been run away from the Sunday school. After three unsuccessful attempts to hold their attention to the Sunday school lesson, this wise teacher changed his

plans and began to find out where the boys' interests lay. He found they were interested in hunting coons. At the close of the class period a coon hunt was arranged, in which the teacher was to be introduced to the delights of hunting coons in a creek bottom. The hunt itself was a trying experience to the teacher. He found himself the butt of many pranks and jokes, but from that time on he was firmly established in the confidence of the boys, was taken into their fellowship, and the class was transformed into one of the most interested groups in the entire school. A miracle had been wrought by forming a contact at the point of interest with the boys.

3. *Social Life.* The social instinct is a God-implanted one. The desire for association between older girls and boys is an indication of coming manhood and womanhood. Here, as at no other place in its program, the Church can render a real service in character building. There is no better qualification for a teacher of adolescent girls than to be a real friend and companion, and for boys a pal, a chum, a confidant. One of the reasons why the country and small-town dance has captured so many hundreds of our young people and has involved the homes of many of the best families of the Church is because the Church and Church people have not been interested in the social life of the young people and have made no effort to provide clean, wholesome social life under proper supervision. The pastor, superintendent, or the teacher can render no better service to the growing life of the community than to devote part of each week to a supervision of the social life of the young.

Our program has mostly been made up of "don'ts." We scarcely ever say to our young people: "Come, let us do together something worth while." Most boys and girls do not go wrong because they are vicious. They fall by the way because there has not been intelligent interest in their social life on the part of their elders. Parties and socials at the church, in the home, and, in pleasant weather, picnics and parties in the open furnish a splendid opportunity for character building.

Frequently a teacher is so situated that family or business duties prevent him from giving the time and attention to the week-day work that is necessary, and here is a fine opportunity for some one who may not be qualified as a teacher to assist in looking after the recreational and social life of the members of the class. In the social life, as in the classification, we need to observe the principle of grading. Things that are of interest to juniors are a bore to seniors. Games that will interest an intermediate would not interest young people. Let every Sunday school make some provision for the social life of its pupils.

4. *Social Service.* "Be ye doers of the word" carries also a responsibility for social service. Every community has a few saintly men and women who visit the sick and look after the poor and the needy. Such a service, however, should not be left to a few old people alone. Youth responds to the challenge to serve, and one of the reasons why our communities have so few people who are ready to minister to the needs of the unfortunate is because we have never given our young people a chance to learn how to serve. Helping in homes where there is

sickness, doing chores and running errands, looking after the poor and the unfortunate are some of the happy opportunities for service that are to be found in every community. In fact, there is no community in America that does not need Good Samaritans.

Our young people should not always be entertained and amused. They should be constantly reminded of the needs of others, and in ministering to such needs in their own community they are developing within them the missionary spirit that will cause them to see the whole world as a field for Christian service. There are many movements for the betterment of community life in which the Sunday school and its members may take an important part, such as the entering of Sunday school classes in club contests under the supervision of county farm demonstrators, taking part in all new movements for the improvement of roads, schoolhouses, and other public institutions, and the like. Where such work is needed classes should be enlisted in making improvements on the church property and the parsonage.

Men who have moved away from the open country and the small town have frequently testified that the reason for their leaving was that there was "nothing doing." Life was dull and drab. Older people were not interested in the life and enthusiasms of youth. The fact remains, however, that the small town and the rural section offer a multitude of opportunities for character building that cannot be had in the congested centers of the cities.

Let the small Church get away from the idea that

its function is confined to one meeting on Sunday and the revival in the summer time and that its task is to serve as a springboard for people to jump into heaven or a fire insurance policy to keep them out of torment. Let it catch a vision of the fact that it is preparing the leadership for business and politics, for professional life and the ministry, that is to do the constructive work of the world. Let it remember that the injunction of James was that we might become "doers of the word, not hearers only."

Supervision

Whatever the nature of the week-day activity, whether it be games, social life, or service, the most important feature is that there shall be proper supervision. Here it is that the pastor, superintendent, teacher, or some other suitable person is to render most excellent service. Whoever shall undertake to supervise the play, recreation, or social life of the pupils must have an appreciation of childhood and youth, must be able to look through their eyes to see things from their viewpoint, to sympathize with their mistakes and errors. It is not that we are to condone in young people the doing of things that are vicious and excuse it on the ground that youth must sow its wild oats, but that we are to take into account the fact that they are young and have not reached the viewpoint of adults. The supervisor should have something very attractive to offer in place of social pleasures that are dangerous. A program that is made up of "don'ts" and "can'ts" will never get very far in helping childhood and youth to do what they should. The super-

visor is not to be a censor, a critic, or a grouch, but a sympathetic, helpful friend.

Every crowd or gang will have its own leader. The traits of leadership appear very early in adolescence. The skillful superintendent or teacher will cultivate the friendship and confidence of the group leader and utilize this natural leader in accomplishing the desired ends. Youth will not be driven, but is easily lead. If the supervisor shall gain the confidence of the leader of a group, anything within the bounds of reason can be done with the whole group. There is scarcely a community in America, no matter how widely scattered the people may be, where there is not some way for ministering to the play, recreation, social, and service life of the Sunday school pupils and for helping them to become "doers of the word and not hearers only."

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. Does religion have any relation to the everyday life of the pupil?
2. Look up what James said about the man who was a hearer and not a doer of the Word.
3. What is the relation between learning and doing?
4. Name some week-day activities of the pupil in which the Sunday school should be interested.
5. Why is it important that the Church should look after the week-day activities of its pupils?
6. What are some forms of Christian service that can be rendered by the pupils of your Sunday school?
7. What importance did Jesus attach to service as he gave us the story of the Good Samaritan or painted the picture of the last judgment?

CHAPTER IX

SPECIAL DAYS

THE many Christian festivals and the many different seasons of the year offer a splendid opportunity for varying the session of the Sunday school by the observance of special days. For many of these days splendid suggestive programs have been arranged, but great care should be taken by the Workers' Council to see that the special days are not so emphasized as to become commonplace. Too many special days will injure the work of the Sunday school more than not to observe any of them. The purpose of a special day is to give recognition to certain outstanding interests in the life of the community or Church. In this chapter we are suggesting a good many days which may be used for such a purpose, some of them suitable for the whole school, others to be observed only in part, but not all of them to be observed in any one year. In an earlier chapter we urged that the young children should if possible have rooms provided for their own use throughout the entire session of the school. Some of the special days, however, will furnish an opportunity for bringing all the groups of the Sunday school together. A special-day program that is to include all the school should be so arranged that each department may have some part in it, and should be of such a nature that it can be understood and appreciated by all. A program for Easter, Christmas, Thanksgiving, or a patriotic day

will easily lend itself to such an arrangement. Other special-day programs will need to be carefully guarded and used only for the older members of the school. On certain occasions, such as Sunday School Day, Rally Day, and Training Day, it will be well, where practical, to use the eleven o'clock hour if the pastor is willing. We are naming a large number of special days so that the superintendent and Workers' Council may have a variety from which to select. Not more than six special days should be observed in one year where the whole school is to be brought together.

Proper Use of Special Days

A special day program should not be allowed to disturb the teaching period. It should take the place of the regular worship program for that particular day. It should not be boisterous or of such a nature as to conflict with the spirit of a worship service. If special features are to be introduced, they should be prepared beforehand and made to harmonize with the entire spirit of the occasion.

Some Special Days to Observe

Missionary Day. Every Methodist Sunday school should observe Missionary Day once each month with a suitable program and a missionary offering. The purpose of such a program is to create missionary interest in every pupil in the school. The program should include interesting stories and incidents in the lives of missionaries, studies in the geography and history of the countries where the Church has missions, and letters

from those countries giving the progress of the work. This program may take the place of the regular worship service where a missionary theme is selected, or it may take the form of a report from the mission field or a story of some missionary adventure.

In order that the missionary interest may become a part of the life of the pupil, a missionary offering should be taken for some definite missionary object. Missionary and Sunday School Boards provide "Specials" that range from a few dollars up to any amount that a Sunday school may be able to carry. By all means, the Sunday school, after a careful study of its own resources and of its own interest, should undertake to carry some missionary special and use this special as the means of definite missionary education. It will be well for every Sunday school to communicate with the Superintendent of Missionary Education and secure suggestions and programs that will be suitable for the observance of Missionary Day and a list of mission specials from which the school may select its own special to be supported by the offering on Missionary Sunday.

Patriotic Days. Quite frequently Sunday will fall upon some patriotic day, such as the Fourth of July, Memorial Day, or Armistice Day. These occasions lend themselves very nicely to emphasizing the importance of Christian citizenship. Programs may also be profitably built around the birthday of great national characters where the meaning and significance of Christian citizenship may be emphasized.

Decision Day. Decision Day is one of the most im-

portant of all the days in the Sunday school calendar. There is not space in this little text to thoroughly discuss this important day. It is a day that should come at the close of a period of personal evangelism upon the part of the Sunday school officers and teachers, leading up to a time set for the purpose of granting to pupils the privilege of publicly confessing Christ. Great care should be taken that the observance of this day is not made mechanical. It will be of value only when it comes at the close of a carefully planned and vital program of personal evangelism. It should be observed for the departments above the primary, and if possible in separate groups, not throwing the children and the adults together in such a service. Special leaflets on this can be had by addressing denominational headquarters. If an evangelistic campaign is to head up with Easter Sunday, Decision Day should come at least two weeks ahead of that occasion so that the pastor and teachers may have the opportunity of visiting in the homes of the children and talking over with their parents the matter of Church membership and so that by proper instruction they may be prepared for Church membership before Easter Sunday. It is not necessary that Decision Day be observed at that particular time of the year, since continuous personal evangelism should be a part of the program of every Sunday school.

Easter. Easter is one of the great Christian festivals that is observed by many Churches and is coming more and more to be emphasized as a day for a great annual ingathering of Church members. Sunday school pupils who have been led to a conscious knowledge of

Jesus Christ during the year will find this a most impressive time for taking the vows of the Church. Wherever possible, children should be received into the Church in a separate class from adults.

Sunday School Day. This is one great day that should be observed by the whole Sunday school, if possible, at eleven o'clock on Sunday. The Discipline provides for its observance on the third Sunday in April or as near thereto as practical. The General Sunday School Board provides suitable programs, and most Conference Boards will furnish them free of cost to any Sunday school making application for them. The object of this day is to bring before the entire membership of the Church the purpose and work of the Sunday school in religious education. A special offering should be taken on this day, to be dedicated to the Sunday school extension work. Many of our Conferences depend largely upon the Sunday School Day offering for carrying on their Conference Sunday school program.

Mother's Day. Mother's Day has come to be nationally observed as a day in which special tribute to motherhood can be paid. This day should usually be observed with departmental programs, different appeals being made to different groups, calling for an increased respect, honor, and love for mothers. This can be made a most impressive and beautiful service.

Promotion Day. The observance of this day is very essential to the maintaining of real educational work in the Sunday school. If a boy attends his day school from year to year and is promoted from grade to grade

and attends a Sunday school where he has the same lessons, the same teacher, and things are done in the same way year after year, he soon reaches the conclusion that he is getting nowhere, and just as soon as his parents will permit he quits. He can hardly be blamed for this, for youth wants to feel like it is making headway. Promotion Day serves to give definite recognition to the progress that is being made by the pupils.

It is to be remembered that it is the pupil that is to be promoted. In a small Sunday school where, for instance, there is only one class in the Primary group the same teacher will have many pupils during a period of three years, but as the pupils pass out of this age they should be promoted to the class above, the teacher remaining with those pupils that have been promoted from the lower class. This plan will serve two good purposes. It will enable the teacher to become more and more proficient with that particular age group, and it will make it possible for the pupil to receive the benefits of contact with more than one teacher. Occasionally a teacher has successfully held a group of pupils together clear through childhood and youth, but such teachers are rare. More pupils, many times over, are driven out of Sunday school because they become tired of contact with the same teacher year after year than have remained because of their love for one particular teacher. On Promotion Day there should be a program for the whole school, and at this time the handwork of the younger pupils might be exhibited as well as the memory work and the songs that they have learned.

Training Day. In connection with Promotion Day it may be very profitable to observe Training Day. If the pastor will permit, use the eleven o'clock hour for this program. At this service the pastor may deliver an address on the importance of a trained leadership in the Sunday school, and it will furnish a fine opportunity for launching the fall and winter training program and for making plans for an all-year-round training class. This will also be a good time to install any new officers or teachers, publicly dedicating them to their tasks. As a part of the service the pastor can deliver a charge to the officers and teachers, pointing out the responsibility that rests upon them as teachers of religion. This really ought to be one of the great days in the calendar of each congregation, and particularly can it be made so in connection with a promotion program held at the regular hour for Church service. The best time for Promotion Day is the last Sunday in September. The Sunday school year usually begins on the first Sunday in October, and new classes should be formed and new teachers installed at least a week before the opening of the new Sunday school year.

Rally Day. Rally Day should be observed at the time the greatest number of people are returning from their summer vacations and other conditions in the community that affect the attendance at Church and Sunday school services are most favorable. In some communities the first Sunday in September is a good time for making an unusual effort to rally all the people in the community to start in for the fall and winter work. The entrance of new members and the returning

of old ones can well be emphasized on this occasion. The program should be largely inspirational and produce great enthusiasm. Programs for this day can be had from the denominational publishing house.

Thanksgiving Day. This is one of the great annual festivals that is observed in America and in the Sunday school should usually be observed by the separate groups. The program should take the place of the ordinary worship service for the day with some added features that will lead the pupils to an expression of thanksgiving and praise to God for his goodness and bounty. Opportunity should be given for the pupils to make some definite expression in the way of offerings of food, clothing, or other things for those who are less fortunate than themselves.

Christmas Day. The Sunday nearest the twenty-fifth of December will always remain a Sunday of supreme interest in Christian communities. Here again an appropriate program for each group should be provided. The program, whether given on Sunday or a week day, should aim to lead the children of the Sunday school away from the old idea of thinking about what they are going to get to the ideal that was expressed in the life of Jesus, so that the season may be observed, not as a day for receiving, but a day for giving good gifts to others because of God's great gift to us. The White Christmas service is becoming more and more popular. This service should have for its central theme the idea of *others.* Some beautiful programs have been provided by the Methodist Publishing House that will enable any Sunday school to observe the Christmas season

with real Christian service. In communities where there are many poor families a Christmas tree given for them by a Sunday school group will prove a very enjoyable occasion, but a Christmas tree celebration for the distribution of gifts and candy to the well-to-do children of the community is not a real demonstration of the Christ spirit. A social gathering at Christmas may be made very interesting and profitable for the Sunday school, but the giving of presents on such occasions should be discouraged unless they be for those who are really in need.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. Of what value to the Sunday school are special days?
2. Name some of the special days that could be observed in your Sunday school?
3. Should a special day service take the place of the regular period? Why, or why not?
4. What preparation should be made for special day programs?

CHAPTER X

RECORDS AND REPORTS

Why Keep Records?

An institution that is doing anything worth while needs to keep a record of its work. No matter how small the bank or the store may be, its owners keep a set of books, or at least one book, in order that they may know how much stock or money they have on hand, whether or not they are running at a profit, and whether the business is growing. The smaller the business the simpler the form of records, and yet they should be complete enough to contain full information about the business.

So it is with the Sunday school. It should keep a set of books or records, very simple if the school is small, but they should contain enough information to enable the officers and teachers in the school to know something about what the school is doing and whether or not it is making progress. The superintendent and other officers need to know just what the condition of the Sunday school is and not have to be always guessing. They need to know the names of the pupils. They need to know who are attending regularly. They need to know the financial condition of the Sunday school and the record of attendance of each officer and teacher.

Kinds of Records

There should be a record of all the meetings of the Workers' Council. There should also be a record of

each session of the Sunday school. There should be a record of each class, and in each class a record of each pupil.

Workers' Council Record. The records of the Workers' Council should show the names of all the officers and teachers present and whether any members were absent on account of sickness or other sufficient cause. Such a record would enable the pastor and superintendent at the close of the year to check up on the faithfulness of the members of the Council. The Workers' Council record should also show all matters of business and any of the reports of committees, the treasurer, or others that are made to the Council. The secretary of the school should have provided for him a regular minute book in which these records are to be kept. They should be dated and officially signed by the superintendent and secretary of the school. The election of new officers and teachers from year to year should be recorded in the minutes. The Workers' Council minutes are the historical record of the Sunday school. They should therefore be neatly and accurately kept.

Records of the School Sessions. These records should also be compiled by the general secretary, properly dated, and neatly kept. The general secretary will depend very largely upon the records that are made up by the various classes, and the accuracy of his records will depend upon the accuracy of the class and individual records that have been prepared for him. Much emphasis should be laid upon the importance of keeping accurate records. Remember, in the Sunday

school we are training the growing generation in methods of conducting the work of the Church, and surely there is room for improvement along this line.

There are a good many things that will need to go in the Sunday school record. If the school is meeting in a common worship service, it will be well to record the name of the leader of the service and the theme or Scripture topic that was used for that particular day. If there is any unusual feature or special day observance, this also should go into the record. The record should in every case show the number of officers and teachers present; and if any are absent on account of sickness, the fact should be recorded. Teachers will also desire to know the total number of pupils that are from time to time enrolled in the school, the number that are present, and the number on time. If there are any special class activities or any business that must be attended to, it should show in these minutes. The records should also show the financial receipts for each session.

Class Records. There will need to be a record kept in each class. In the younger groups this record will be kept by the teacher. In the older groups it may be kept by the teacher or by a class secretary. This record should show the presence or absence of the teacher and each member of the class, and also the number present, the number sick, the amount of the class offering, the number of pupils away from home, and any special work that may have been undertaken by the class during the preceding week. Printed forms for class reports covering all those items can be secured from

any publishing house handling Sunday school supplies. These forms can be readily and easily filled in by the teacher or class secretary and, along with the class offering, handed in to the general secretary for use in making up the general report.

Individual Record. The teacher will need to keep an individual record for each pupil in the class. First of all, this individual record should contain certain information about the pupil: such as the name, parent's name, telephone number, and post-office address. If the pupil is a member of the Church or has made a profession of Christ and has not yet joined the Church, the teacher should have this information. The teacher should also know, and it is well to have this information on the pupil's record, whether or not the parents of the child are members of the Church. If the pupils are of school age, the school standing should be recorded; also the birthday, month and year; and if the pupil has any special gift, such as musical or reading talent, this should be on record. The records should show the date on which the pupil entered school and at the close of the year his promotion. The individual record should show whether or not the pupil has been punctual from Sunday to Sunday, whether he has brought an offering, has studied the lesson, and his behavior in class. It takes but little time to place such information on the specially prepared record blank, and without it the teacher will be continually guessing at many things.

Financial Record. There should be kept an accurate record of all moneys received and paid out. In the small school the secretary may act as treasurer also,

but in the larger school there should be the regular treasurer. But, whoever handles the money, he should keep an accurate record of it from Sunday to Sunday and should pay out the money only upon the order of the superintendent. Many a Sunday school runs hopelessly into debt because the members of the school do not know its financial condition. It will be well, therefore, if at least once a month at the Workers' Council meeting the secretary or treasurer will give a detailed financial report showing all moneys received and all bills that have been paid.

The Record Keepers

Since many of the records of the Sunday school secretary are dependent upon other records that are given to him by class secretaries or teachers, it will be necessary for them to coöperate with him in every way possible in order that his records may be complete and accurate. Some of the marks of a good secretary of the Sunday school might be enumerated as follows:

1. The secretary should be accurate and neat.

2. He should know what records to keep and how to instruct other persons to furnish him these records.

3. He should, in conference with the Workers' Council, work out the record system that is to be used and have it thoroughly explained so that every one will know just what is expected.

4. He should attend every session of the Workers' Council and every session of the Sunday school and, if compelled to be absent, should see to it that his records

are present and that some capable person is ready to take his place.

5. He should not be contentious with the officers and teachers who fail to give information as he would like to have it.

6. He should prepare a report for each Workers' Council, showing the progress of the school, the average attendance, the total enrollment, the condition of the finances, and any other matters of interest to the Council.

7. He should prepare a complete report of the condition of the Sunday school to be presented by the superintendent at each Quarterly Conference. This report should also be read in the presence of the whole school in order that the entire membership may know its condition.

Making Up the Reports

One of the most disturbing elements in the average Sunday school is this very matter of making up the reports. The teacher is anxious that the report shall not be made up until all the late pupils have arrived, and when she is about half through the lesson the secretary will come around, calling for the report, thus breaking into the lesson period and diverting the attention of the pupils. In order to avoid such confusion the teachers and secretary in the Workers' Council should agree upon a definite time at which the record shall be made up. In some schools it will be advisable not to do this until after the class work is over. This will give a complete record of the entire attendance.

Then when the classes have been closed the secretary may gather up the reports and enter them in his report book at his leisure. This, of course, prevents the secretary having the report to read at that particular session; but this is a help rather than a hindrance, for the time spent in reading a report that has been hastily prepared is apt to be wasted. No records should be prepared hastily and before the entire work of the school is complete, otherwise the report must be inaccurate. It has been often doubted whether there is any value at all in having the secretary read a report. The best method of getting the various reports before the school is to have a blackboard or chart at the front of the main assembly room, on which the secretary may place the report for the last Sunday and compare it with that of a year before. This does not need to be read, for every one who has eyes to see can read it; and since we remember ten times as easily what we see as what we hear, much more advantage will be gained by having the report displayed than by reading it aloud.

If there are any items of special interest in a report, such as gain or loss, that need to be called to the attention of the school, it is very easy for the superintendent, secretary, or pastor to point to the visible report so that all eyes may see at a glance just what the item is.

Very much of the success or failure of the Sunday school depends upon the kind of records that it keeps. It is not enough to know how many pupils were present on a given Sunday. We want to know what pupils were present; and if the records are kept as indicated

above, the pastors, superintendents, and teachers will be able to know who are the irregular pupils and thus to stimulate regularity. A good record will also enable the pastor and superintendent to check up on the punctuality of teachers and officers.

These may seem like small matters, but they are items that enter very largely into character building, and the Sunday school that will stimulate regularity and promptness of attendance on the part of its officers and teachers will thus make a splendid contribution to the character of the boys and girls that come to its sessions.

Too much care cannot be taken in selecting a competent and faithful Sunday school secretary, one who will appreciate the importance of the task and will always faithfully work at it. The Sunday school secretaryship is not something that should be given out as a compliment, but the person elected to this position should be elected on the basis of his qualifications for the task.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. Why is it important to keep records in the Sunday school? What kind of records should be kept?
2. Name some of the important matters connected with the Sunday morning session that should be recorded.
3. Why should a record of finances be kept?
4. What is the value of making frequent reports of the financial condition of the school?
5. What are some of the things connected with the work of the pupil that should be recorded?

CHAPTER XI

SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT

The Influence of Physical Surroundings

The character of a child is very largely determined by the kind of a home in which he lives. A house may be small, the furniture scanty, and the conveniences limited; but if the place is kept neat, clean, and in order, it ceases to be a mere house and becomes a home and will assist in building good character for the children in that home. No matter how large a house may be, how fine the furniture, how many the comforts, if it is sloven and dirty, if things are in disorder, the floors unswept, the beds unmade, the windows unwashed, and the yard littered up, such a home will assist in the forming of loose habits and will thus seriously affect the character of its children. It is a true saying that one never outlives his childhood home. The old oaken bucket, the spring, the brook, the orchard, the cellar, the storeroom filled with good things for winter, the barnyard, and the haymow—all such memories make dear to us the scenes of our childhood, and they have all played a part in the making of our characters.

Just as the character of the child is influenced by the physical environments of his home, so his religious education is greatly affected by the physical condition of the buildings and grounds where he first goes to Sunday school, where he gets his first religious impression under the direction of the Church. When youth begins to

place values upon the things that touch his life, it is natural that he should estimate the Church largely in terms of its physical appearance. His appreciation of the Church will be largely determined by the place which the Church provides for him in childhood.

Why We Lose the Youth from the Church

Every Protestant Church in America is facing the problem of keeping the older boys and girls loyal to its services. During childhood they are brought or sent by their parents and are regular attendants upon the Sunday school sessions. As soon as they reach the period when they are able to come by themselves and are permitted to choose for themselves, they begin to rapidly fall away from the Sunday school and Church services. This is one of the most serious problems of the pastor and Sunday school worker. "There's a reason," and there is no question but that one reason is the fact that the Church has made little or no physical provision for childhood and youth. Think of thousands of our present churches. When they were built and the pews installed, it was all planned for grown men and women. There were no little chairs or benches for children so that they might sit in comfort through the services. On the other hand, children were placed upon high benches with their legs dangling over the edge, the sharp corner interfering with the circulation of the blood and wearing on the nerves that lead to the feet. This explains in part the restlessness of small children during a long Church service. Nature revolts at such punishment. Can you imagine adults being seated so

that their feet could not touch the floor. If you can. you can also imagine that there would be much complaint and little attendance at the Church service. In the home where children are welcomed and loved things are always planned for their comfort and convenience. The child has his own chair, his toys, his corner, his place at the table, his bed, and perhaps his own room. His things and place are sacredly guarded by his parents. When he goes to Church, how different! As soon as he begins to think and observe for himself he discovers that here everything belongs to the "grown-ups." If an extra classroom is talked of as an addition to the building, it is often for a class of grown men or women. If one of these rooms is to be carpeted and made more cheerful, this again is for the grown-ups. He is shifted around from place to place in the building to suit the convenience of adult classes. There is not even a bench or a dark corner that he can call his own. Is it any wonder that as soon as he is old enough to choose for himself he wanders away with the gang or spends his time in other places than the church?

As in the home that makes no place for its children, where nothing is sacred to them, the child soon wanders away, so it is that in the Church that makes no physical provision for its childhood there will be found a generation of lost sons. The Church that fails to provide a special place for its gang of boys need not be surprised to find them holding forth in caves, in barn lofts, and in deserted buildings. The Church that really loves its childhood and its youth will begin to plan suitable places for them.

The Church and Public Improvements

Children place an estimate on the value of things in keeping with the amount of investment that parents make in them. "Our car cost the most" is positive proof to the boy that "our car is the best." So he places a value upon the church as compared with other institutions and investments in the community. The father of a family gives his enthusiastic support to the erection of a new, modern public school building in order that his children may have the very best in the way of building and equipment for the study of grammar, history, and arithmetic. But this same father may resist all efforts upon the part of the pastor and Sunday school workers to build ever so small an addition to the old church or to tear down the old church and replace it with a new and modern building suitable for the teaching of religion and training in Christian living. The children in that family will naturally reach the conclusion that arithmetic, history, and grammar are of a great deal more importance in life than religion is. Scarcely any other conclusion could be reached. The boy thinks his father's judgment is good; and since the father enthusiastically supports the one and discourages the other, he is sure there is nothing in the Church very much worth while. Thousands upon thousands of dollars are being spent in almost every American community for building better roads so that travel may be easier, and these roads are running in front of church buildings that are in many communities the most disreputable looking of all the public buildings.

The tabernacle that was built in the wilderness and

the temple at Jerusalem held a very important place in Jewish life. No matter where the Jew went throughout the world, his thought and affections were centered at Jerusalem and in the temple. No wonder the temple held the affections of the people! Read the description of it as given in Exodus xxvi. and xxvii. and 1 Kings vi. and see with what care the materials were selected. The choicest and most precious things that could be had were used in this building.

The community that fails to appreciate the value of a beautiful and useful church building need not expect to be able to magnify the Church in the mind of childhood. It may be that the Church membership cannot afford a large and modern building, but every community can afford to keep what it has in good condition, clean, attractive, and inviting, windows in repair, and the heating system in good order. Everything should be swept and dusted, the books arranged in order, and provision made for heat on Saturday so that the Sunday services may be conducted without interruption and in decent comfort.

The Church Grounds

Not only should the building be made attractive and arranged so that it may accommodate the various groups that come for their religious instruction, but the grounds surrounding the church and the approaches should be kept clear of weeds and accumulated rubbish. A lawn with a few shrubs and flowers and trees will make even a small church look attractive to the whole community. The entire Church membership ought to

be interested in the upkeep and improvement of the buildings and grounds, though this responsibility may well be distributed among various persons or classes. Even the youngest of the children will unite with enthusiasm and profit in helping to keep the church house and yard in order if given a chance.

At least twice each year in country neighborhoods certain days of the week ought to be set aside for caring for the church building and grounds. Voluntary help can be secured easily, and the cost need not be very great. If the grounds are sufficiently large to the side or in the rear of the church building, they can be put to good use by making them over into a community center playground, particularly for the use of the smaller children. A few swings, slides, merry-go-rounds, croquet grounds, and other such equipment can be installed without much labor or cost and become of very great service to the children of a community under proper adult supervision.

Commission on Architecture

The General Conference of 1922 made provision for the creation of a Commission on Architecture, composed of representatives of the General Sunday School Board and the Board of Church Extension. It is the duty of this Commission to work out standards and plans suitable for various types and sizes of churches and for improvements on old buildings. This Commission is ready to give counsel and advice without any charge whatever to persons interested in remodeling or equipping new buildings, and the Architectural Department

of the General Board of Church Extension will furnish blue prints and plans at a minimum cost upon application to that department. One of the provisions in the Program of Work for the "C Type" Sunday school is that all plans for new buildings or improvements must be submitted to this Commission for their inspection and suggestions. This Commission is always at the service of every Church that may seek suggestions and advice so as to avoid the many blunders that have been made in the church architecture of the past.

Standard for "Type C" Sunday School Buildings

1. All walls of the building should be along straight lines as far as practicable.

2. Provision should be made for not less than three rooms in addition to the auditorium. A minimum of five rooms is preferable.

3. Good walls, as nearly soundproof as possible, should separate at least three of the rooms from one another and from the auditorium.

4. In each of at least three rooms there should be provided a minimum of fifteen square feet per pupil. Entrances to the rear of the pupils.

5. Windows of clear glass should be in at least three of the rooms.

6. Each room, including the auditorium, should be so arranged that proper lighting, heating, and ventilation may be provided.

7. If there is a basement, the floor should not be more than three feet below grade level.

8. Lighting and seating should be so arranged that pupils do not have to face a glare.

9. At least one room should be arranged so that it may be used for special gatherings of the people of the Church and community.

10. Due regard must be given to safety regulations as to fires, storms, etc.

11. Sanitary toilet and drinking facilities should be provided.

12. Built-in cabinets or other provision should be made for the care of books, lesson material, and other supplies.

13. Floors properly protected or constructed so as to avoid cold, dampness, noise, and dust.

14. Ample provision for the care of wraps, coats, overshoes, umbrellas, and hats.

15. Walls and woodwork carefully planned as to color schemes, light, and general æsthetic values.

Suggestive Plans

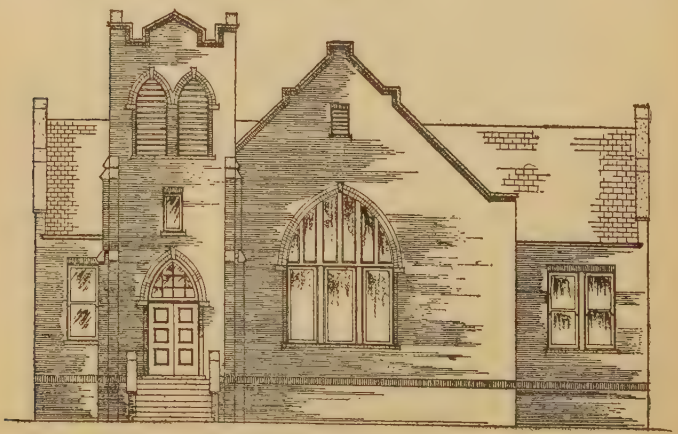
The following plans with general description have been selected from the published plans of the Board of Church Extension. They will serve somewhat as an illustration of the principles that are set forth in the paragraph on standards. No pastor or building committee ought ever undertake either the remodeling of an old building or the erection of a new building without consulting with the architectural experts that are provided in every denomination. Mistakes that are built into brick and mortar are hard to correct and very expensive. The plans given are only suggestive. Many

others may be had by securing the leaflet literature of the Board of Church Extension or by addressing the Department of School Administration of the General Sunday School Board, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn.

Suggestive Church Plan No. 40 can be carried out either in brick or frame construction. There are seven separate rooms besides the auditorium. The pews provide 154 adult sittings, the choir 16, and the four connecting classrooms 68, a total of 238 adult sittings.

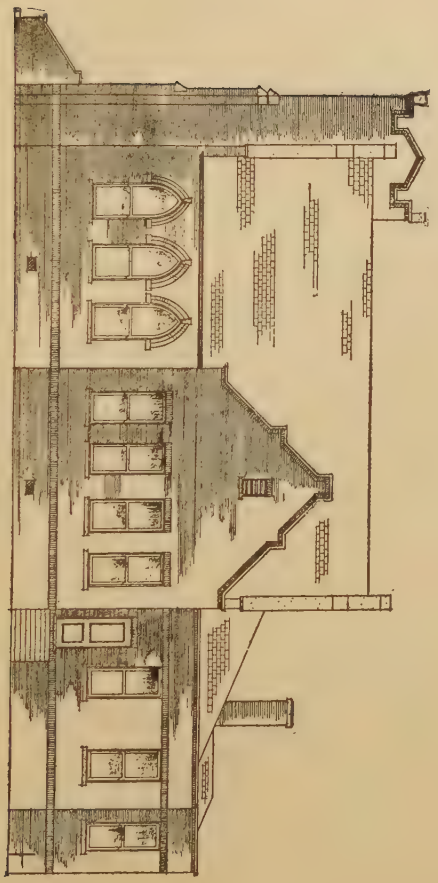
There are separate department rooms for Beginners, Primaries, and Juniors, with outside entrance to each. The auditorium will be used as a place of general assembly for that part of the Sunday school above the Junior age.

There is no basement except for hot-air furnace and fuel.

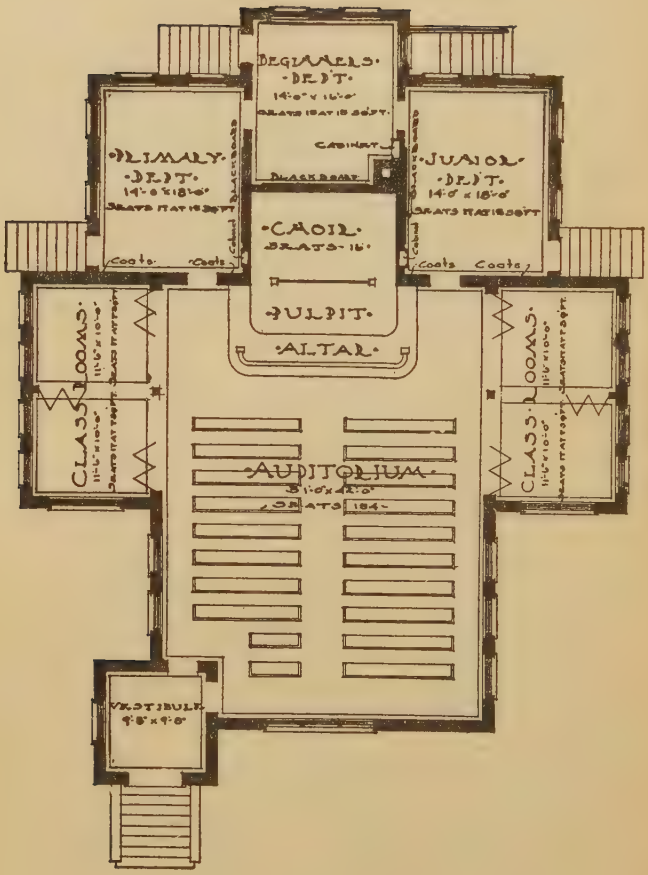


NO. 40. FRONT ELEVATION.

EVANGEL
SCHOOL OF T



NO. 40. SIDE ELEVATION.



NO. 40. FLOOR PLAN.

Suggestive Plan No. 35. This general arrangement has found wide acceptance with small congregations. There is provision for the elementary grades of the Sunday school and a very good equipment for classes of a more advanced age. There are nine separate rooms besides the auditorium, and a number of these can be used to enlarge the seating capacity when needed. The design is attractive in appearance and provides for economical construction.

NO. 35. FRONT ELEVATION.

The auditorium is 31x40 feet in size, and the pews have 140 adult sittings, choir 15, and the six class-rooms opening into the auditorium will seat 122—277 adults in all.

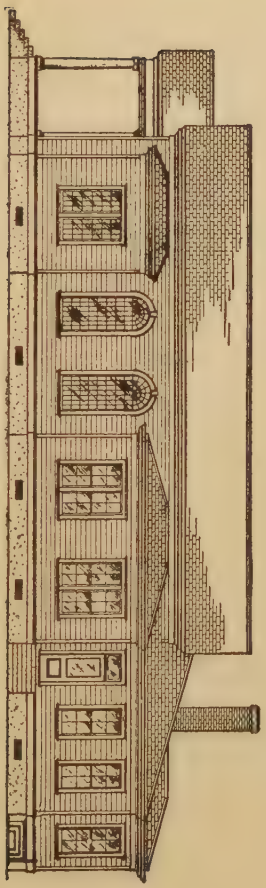
There are separate department rooms for Beginners, Primaries, and Juniors, with outside entrance to each. Communicating doors between department rooms are for emergency purpose only. Allowing fifteen square feet of floor space per pupil, the Beginners Department will accomodate 15, the Primary and Junior Departments 20 each. Seniors and Intermediates can have their separate rooms for class work.

There is no basement except for hot-air furnace and fuel. No toilets or lavatories are shown, though in cases where sewers are accessible these can be provided for with slight additional cost.

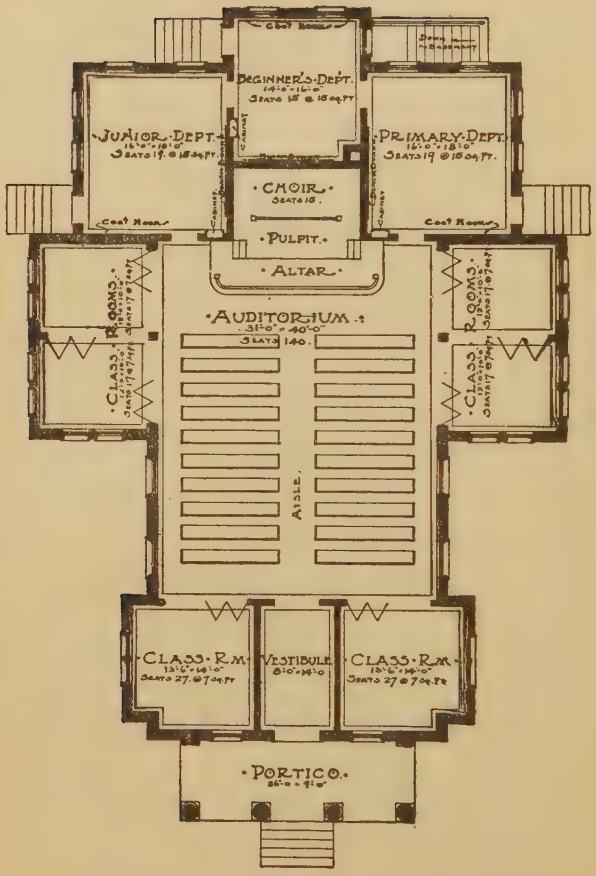
The extreme dimensions are: Width, 59 feet; length, not including steps, 90 feet.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. What is the effect of physical surroundings upon a child?
2. When a youth lives in a community having good roads, good public schools, and good public buildings and attends a Sunday school in a dilapidated church building, what value does he place upon religion as compared with good roads and other community enterprises?
3. If the church building is limited in its room, should preference be given to the occasional large crowd, or should it provide for fifty-two weeks of educational work?
4. If only adult pews are to be found in the church building, can the children be seated in comfort?
5. If the adult Bible class occupies the center of the church building, how does this affect the opportunity of the younger children for the study of their lesson?
6. Why should the building committee of the local Church consult with the officers of the General Sunday School Board before building or repairing?



NO. 35. SIDE ELEVATION.



NO. 35. FLOOR PLAN.

CHAPTER XII

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKER AS AN EVANGELIST

Aim

The supreme purpose of the Sunday school is to bring all its pupils into a personal, conscious, and intelligent relationship to Jesus Christ and to train them for his service. We may build great cathedrals and beautiful churches, install art-glass windows and sweet-toned organs, raise millions for missions, build many hospitals, and do much social service work; we may select and train thousands of young men and young women and send them forth on missionary journeys; we may conduct a Sunday school in every community in the land, but unless these agencies shall bring the individuals to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, they are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. The aim of the Sunday school is well expressed in that now familiar statement: "The Sunday school seeks to offer a plan by which each pupil may be led to a knowledge of God's will and to a definite acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Lord, and to develop a Christian character that is expressed through worship, right living, and efficient service."

Definition

In this chapter we are dealing with the Sunday school worker as an evangelist. It might be well for us to get

a clear idea as to what this word means. What is an evangelist? What is evangelism? Without any attempt at historical definition of the term, but getting our idea from the practice of the New Testament Church, we might well say that evangelism is telling the good news that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." All the means that are used for winning people to an intelligent acquaintanceship with Jesus Christ may truly be defined as evangelism. It naturally follows then that an evangelist is anyone who brings this good news. The mother who in nurturing her children trains them up in the way they should go, teaching them to love and obey their Heavenly Father, is an evangelist. The Sunday school worker who teaches growing life week after week, whether it be in the giving of formal instruction in the class or in the living example that has so much to do with the forming of Christian character, is an evangelist. The superintendent and pastor who by godly living, by precept and example are demonstrating the Christian life, these also are evangelists. The one thing the Church needs to get clear in its thinking is that evangelism is not confined to a single type of service or experience nor to a special season, but is a process that should be going on wherever Christian men and women live and teach. The very essence of Christianity is in sharing the best one has with others. The best the Christian has to share is Christ, and the best evidence of a Christian experience is found in the desire to share this experience with others.

So, whether it be in the home, in the school, or on the playground, whenever boys and girls are won to the Christian way of living, they are being evangelized; and whoever is associated in the forming of Christian character and winning to a personal acceptance of Christ is an evangelist. Every Christian should be an evangelist, and surely every officer and teacher in the Sunday school should be brought to realize the high privilege and opportunity of winning souls to Christ.

The Sunday School a Promising Field

In the last few years the Church has awakened to a knowledge of the fact that its most promising and fruitful field of evangelism is the Sunday school. It is fruitful because the fallow soil of childhood and youth is a rich garden spot for the planting and cultivation of religious truth and habit. It is promising because it offers to us the beautiful, unstained, unhardened lives that can be won and saved to the kingdom of Christ without wandering away into sin. It has been estimated many times that from eighty to ninety per cent of our present Protestant Church membership came into the Church directly from the Sunday school. An investigation of the converts of almost any revival will reveal the fact that practically every one of them has had Christian training in childhood and youth. Harold Begbie, the great slum worker of London, tells us that only one of the characters appearing in "Twice-Born Men" had not had religious training in childhood. Almost every pastor, Sunday school superintendent, teacher, or officer in the missionary society in any

Church will testify to the fact that careful religious teaching and training during childhood account for their present religious life. Sunday school teachers have a golden opportunity for service to God and man that is excelled only by the privilege of Christian parenthood.

A Coöperative Task

One of the most important facts to remember in the work of an evangelist is that it is only when we are conscious of God's Spirit and coöperate with this Spirit that we are able to accomplish results. St. Paul expresses it when he said: "We are God's fellow workers." It is not in our own strength that we are to undertake this great task of winning souls to Christ. It will be under the direction and leadership of the Holy Spirit that we shall go forth in search of those who have not known Christ. In entering upon a partnership such as this the Sunday school worker should realize that the success of the work will depend upon his own fitness.

Physically Fit. The Sunday school teacher who is to be a real soul winner cannot approach the sacred task physically exhausted. The teacher who makes his Sunday school class the last consideration in his plans will not be successful in winning his pupils to Christ. The bright, cheerful face and the warm heart and the personal appearance that indicates that the teacher has stored up energy for the task will go very far toward making contacts with bright, vivacious youth.

Mental Fitness. The teacher must come to the class Sunday after Sunday with mind alert, with lesson prepared, and with knowledge first of all of the Book that

furnishes the material for the religious education of our pupils. The teacher will need to know the Book not merely as a collection of genealogies and biographies, a record of wars and victories, a collection of prophecies, poetry, music, romance, tragedy, travels, and pastorals; but he must know the Book as the Book of Life, the Book that reveals and interprets God in the life and ministry of Jesus. The reason why many pupils get so little from their Sunday school lesson is because the teacher has gotten so little from the Book of books.

Spiritually Fit. The Sunday school worker who would be an evangelist must know from his own experience the joy of Christian living, must have a heart filled with love for the pupil and with a passion for his soul. Spiritual fitness will best be secured by devotional study of the Scriptures and by frequent seasons of secret prayer. The teacher who would be able to impart real enthusiasm for Christian living needs to walk with Jesus on the road to Emmaus, as did the disciples until their "hearts burned within them." The Sunday school teacher who would win souls for the kingdom must first of all have the kingdom within himself. His life must be filled with the spirit of Christ. He cannot introduce a pupil to Christ without first knowing both the pupil and Christ.

The story is told of some children who were playing on a city street. One of them had found a broken piece of mirror and, sitting on a curb, was catching the rays of the afternoon sun and reflecting them into the faces of the passers-by and into the office windows across the street. His little playmates had found pieces of broken

glass and wanted to enjoy the sport with him. To a passer-by they said that, though they had rubbed smut on one side of the glass, and had tried to make it look like the piece of glass held by the other boy, still they could not catch and reflect the sun's rays. Taking the broken pieces of glass in his hand, the passer-by pointed out to them the difference between the pieces they held and the piece of broken mirror. It was the quicksilver on the mirror, said he, that reflected the light. So it is with Sunday school teachers. If they lack the background of a personal experience of Jesus Christ, they cannot reflect him so that others may see and believe.

Some Practical Suggestions

Special Periods. While the work of the Sunday school teacher should be evangelistic in its nature throughout the years, there are special periods when emphasis should be laid upon a definite acceptance of Christ and a public confession of loyalty to him. Just as the plant has grown from the seed, first putting forth stem and leaf and finally, under the influence of the warm sun and the spring rain, lifting its head into blossom, so the religious life of a child may grow from week to week, taking into its nature the religious truths that have been given by the teacher until the natural, normal result of its growth will be to open the heart and turn the face upward and say: "My Lord and my God." Sunday school workers, therefore, need to plan for special seasons of evangelistic effort when the pu-

pils of the school may be offered the opportunity of confessing Christ and pledging him their love and loyalty.

Preparation. A special evangelistic service for children should not be undertaken lightly and without preparation. First of all, the Sunday school teacher should become so intimately acquainted with his pupils that he knows for certain which of them have made a public confession of Christ and which have not. There is nothing that strikes so deep into the heart of a boy who has made a confession of Christ and has been trying to live the Christ life as to have some one ask: "Are you a Christian?" The story is told of a little girl who on a special occasion was invited to come to Jesus and failed to respond to the invitation to go forward to the altar with other members of the class. Afterwards the teacher said to her, "My dear, I was so disappointed in you to-day. I thought you would be the first to want to come to Jesus," and to this the child replied: "I don't understand you. I have never left him."

The second step necessary for the special evangelistic service will be the personal preparation of the teacher, asking divine guidance that the right and wise thing may be said and done as he talks with his pupils on this the most sacred of all relations of life, the relationship to Jesus Christ. Prayer will play a large part in the success of the effort, prayer not only for one's own spiritual enrichment, but prayer that the hearts of the children may be made open and that the message or special appeal may bear fruit.

A third suggestion is that this special period should not be advertised and magnified as though it were a

rally day or some other spectacular event. Our children should never be impressed with the idea that there are only certain set periods of time when they have the opportunity to accept Christ. Our dependence upon the periodical revival as a means of evangelism has impressed upon thousands of our people that only at a certain time and in a spectacular way could God forgive sin. Long before the special time that may be determined upon the teachers should have personal and intimate talks with their pupils. Few persons have access to the heart of the pupil as does the earnest Sunday school teacher. If the teacher has been a loving teacher, a real teacher, the pupil will listen and respond to his appeal for a surrendered life.

Fourth, the teacher should be in close touch with the home and should talk freely with parents about the step he is asking the pupil to take. Many a life has been wrecked because of a lack of understanding on the part of the parents as to what the teacher was trying to do for the pupil.

Fifth, the pastor is a most important factor in these special efforts. He should have the aid of all the teachers in the period of preparation. He should lead in this service that makes for the enrichment of the religious life of his workers. He will need largely to give direction to the plans, to counsel with his workers, to visit in the homes, and to talk with the pupils. There can be no more profitable investment of the pastor's time than to lead an evangelistic program in his own Sunday school. When the day of decision has arrived, it should be the pastor who leads in this service. If he

has been a Sunday school pastor, he will have the admiration, respect, and confidence of the pupils, and he can easily lead them to a public confession and a personal acceptance of Jesus.

Sixth, in the older classes those pupils who have been consistent in their Christian living may well be enlisted in making an appeal to their fellows. If a personal workers' band is organized among the older groups, be sure that only those whose lives are exemplary and whose appeal will challenge the attention of others are selected, else there is great danger of creating the wrong conception of Christian living.

Decision or Confession Day

It will be unfortunate if Decision Day is so magnified in the minds of the pupils that they think of a confession of Christ as an annual event. The Sunday school teachers should be constantly on the watch over the growing, developing life of the Sunday school pupils and never let an opportunity pass when the time seems ripe for such a step to give opportunity for a confession of Christ. It may take place in the classroom, in the home of the pupil, in the home of the teacher, or again it may occur in the public service. After the decision has been reached it is wise to arrange for a special service before the school, possibly before the whole Church, when the public confession of Christ may be made.

The Law of the Grade

Care should be taken that we observe the principle of grading in the evangelistic effort as truly as in the

teaching effort. Every pastor and every teacher should protect the children against the gang or mass movement. This often creates a wrong impression and does permanent injury to the pupil. It is not the right thing to bring pressure to bear upon John to confess Christ just because Bill has done so, and to urge on one or two lone boys just because the other boys in their class have come forward. Perhaps the time for their decision is not at hand. To bring pressure upon pupils to reach a decision when their hearts are not in it is making a mockery of the whole affair so far as they are concerned and ofttimes leaves a scar in the soul for life.

Training for Church Membership

One of the serious losses of the Protestant Church lies in the gap between the decision for Christian life and the period of taking converts into Church membership. As soon as the special period of evangelistic effort in the Sunday school has been completed, special classes should be organized by the pastor, and with the assistance of a few choice persons those who have made a forward step should be trained in the meaning of Church membership. This instruction should be given to the various age groups separately. The meaning of Church membership and its responsibilities will be very simply explained to the Juniors. It will have a larger meaning for the Intermediates and Seniors. It ought to be made a very significant and intelligent matter to those who have come toward maturity and are adults. Not only should these classes be organized, but the pastor should personally interview every individual and

talk over with him his experience, assist him in getting a foothold in the Christian life and guide him in the forming of habits that will help to make his Christian experience deeper and richer. An evangelist once said that too much of our evangelistic effort is patterned after the practice of the cowboys on the Western plains: "Annually the yearlings are all rounded up, branded, and then turned loose to graze for themselves." It is just this that the Church has been doing, making a special effort once each year, making a great ado over it, counting the number of converts, and then turning them loose and telling them to go live for Jesus. They need as much care and assistance after they have made their decision as they did before, and it is a crime against their souls for the Church to accept their decision and then fail to assist them in preparing to live the Christian life.

Joining the Church

This should be the most significant day in the life of the young convert. After he has made his profession of faith in Jesus Christ and has had explained to him the meaning and the responsibilities of Church membership, special plans should be made for his formal reception into the fellowship of the Church. Too often all of the attention is given to the adults who are to be received, shifting the children off to one side, or possibly letting them stand back of the adults. This is not the method that Jesus used. He "took a little child and set him in the midst." The special ritual prepared for children should be used and plenty of time taken so that the day on which they joined the Church will re-

main forever a happy memory. This should be true not only of children, but of all who join the Church. It should be a dignified, solemn occasion. To neglect the ritual or slur over the service that has been set apart for the reception of members into the Church will work an injury that can never be effaced. To magnify the occasion will magnify the importance of the event and make it a day long to be remembered.

In closing let us again state the purpose of the Sunday school as "seeking to offer a plan by which each pupil may be led to a knowledge of God's will and to a definite acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Saviour and Lord and to develop a Christian character that is expressed through worship, right living, and efficient service."

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND REVIEW

1. What is the aim of the Sunday school?
2. What is your aim as an individual Sunday school worker?
3. Give in your own language a definition of evangelism.
4. What do you mean by an evangelist?
5. In what way is the Sunday school a promising field for educational evangelism?
6. What distinction is to be drawn between evangelism of children and the evangelism of adults who have gone away into sin?
7. How can the Sunday school teacher assist the home in bringing boys and girls to a confession of Christ?
8. Give some of the qualifications that are necessary for a soul winner.
9. Outline a plan for evangelism for your Sunday school.

DATE DUE

BV 1520 .S3681 1924

Sensabaugh, Leonidas
Franklin, 1879-

The small Sunday school

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BV1520.S3681 1924
Sensabaugh, L The small Sunday school :
3 0645 0004 6273 5